



We build Australia. Together.

2019 Policy Priorities of the
Australian Construction Industry Forum



acif
Australian Construction
Industry Forum

About ACIF

The Australian Construction Industry Forum (ACIF) is the meeting place for leaders of the construction industry in Australia. ACIF facilitates and supports an active dialogue between the key players in residential and non-residential building, engineering construction, other industry groups, and government agencies.

Our members are among the most significant associations in the industry, spanning the entire asset creation process from feasibility study through design, cost planning, construction, building and management.

ACIF's Agenda

ACIF seeks to develop a successful, strong and sustainable construction industry in Australia.

ACIF is focused on creating a competitive construction and property industry that is a leader in building Australia's prosperity. As well as facilitating communication within the construction sector, ACIF provides governments and other agencies with a central and efficient industry liaison point.

- Air Conditioning and Mechanical Contractors' Association
- Association of Consulting Architects
- Australian Elevator Association
- Australian Institute of Architects
- Australian Institute of Building
- Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors
- Fire Protection Association Australia
- Insulated Panel Council Australasia
- Master Electricians Australia
- National Fire Industry Association
- National Precast Concrete Association Australia
- PrefabAUS
- Society of Construction Law Australia

Find out more at www.acif.com.au

The Australian Construction Industry Forum calls on Australia's political parties to consider and adopt ACIF's policy priorities.

The Australian construction industry employs over 1.2 million Australians, and in 2017-18 had a turnover of \$248 billion.

Therefore, the construction industry is one of the main drivers of the Australian economy and its productivity and success is critical to the growth and success of the Australian economy.

Given the importance of construction to the Australian economy and people, ACIF advocates that the Federal Government and all State and Territory Governments have dedicated construction ministers. This would result in better outcomes for the industry, and enhance a critical sector of the Australian economy.

ACIF has the following policy priorities for 2019:

- Commitment by state and federal governments to implement the recommendations of the Shergold-Weir Report by February 2021.
- Support for the Building Information Modelling Strategy of Australasian BIM Advisory Board.
- The Australian Building & Construction Commission to be retained.
- The implementation of an effective regime to be established to minimise the use of non-conforming building products.



ONE Commitment by Federal and State governments to implement the recommendations of the Shergold-Weir Report by May 2021.

ACIF commends the Federal Government for commissioning the *Building Confidence* report by Professor Peter Shergold AC and Ms Bronwyn Weir.

The 24 recommendations of the report are timely and well-articulated, and if implemented will bring significant improvements to the construction industry and for the Australian population.

ACIF requests that:

■ Federal, State and Territory ministers responsible for building implement the recommendations in their jurisdictions within three years of the release of the report, that is by February 2021.

■ The federal Department of Industry and relevant state authorities issue quarterly scorecards/progress charts to show progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the report. Barriers to implementation should also be identified and strategies articulated to overcome these.

■ Federal and State Ministers ensure their government's procurement processes implement and comply with the relevant recommendations of the report.

■ Progress of the implementation of the report's recommendations be discussed at the BMF-Industry Roundtables, and that these meetings should continue.



TWO Support for the Building Information Modelling Strategy of Australasian BIM Advisory Board.

In line with the Australasian BIM Advisory Board (ABAB), ACIF advocates the following National Digital Engineering Principles to support the adoption, implementation, continued maturity and consistency of BIM.

1. A more consistent application of BIM in public infrastructure should be actively encouraged and supported by government at a level appropriate to the size and complexity of the asset.

2. BIM data formats, standards, protocols, systems and tools should be open and harmonised across governments, where possible, to facilitate greater consistency in engagement with industry.

3. BIM data formats, standards, protocols, systems and tools should be harmonised across whole-of-asset life cycle management processes, where possible, to ensure secure data built up through the design and construction phases of a project is fully utilised in the asset management and operations phases.

4. Governments should work to ensure BIM approaches complement existing project design and development systems and interface with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to graphically display and visualise relevant information captured as part of the BIM process.

5. Governments should work collaboratively across state and territory jurisdictions and with the private sector to drive best practice in the application of BIM in public infrastructure development and management.

6. Governments should seek to actively incorporate lessons learned from all sectors and international experiences in the application of BIM in public infrastructure development and management.

7. Governments should work to build capability, including developing BIM applications that support sustainability, work health and safety, and heritage conversation within the public sector BIM and, where practicable, enable an increase in private sector capability and capacity to optimise the application of BIM.

THREE The Australian Building & Construction Commission to be retained.

ACIF calls for the retention of the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) and the building code administered by the ABCC. The application of these laws has resulted in increased labour productivity in the sector and less days lost to industrial action.

Since the ABCC was re-established on 1 December 2016, and when the ABCC was in place from 2005 to 2012, the building and construction industry (has) enjoyed a period of significantly improved industrial relations and increased productivity in which industrial relations has not been the predominant and negative influence that it had been in the past. The ABCC has benefited all parties in the industry, including workers. Equally importantly, it has benefited the Australian economy and the community. ACIF calls on the ABCC to be retained because from June 2012 to December 2016 a weaker agency administering the Fair Work Act was in place and the powers of that agency as well as the flaws in the Fair Work Act saw an upsurge in industrial activity, and the partial return of the climate of fear and intimidation that had regrettably dogged the industry for decades prior to 2005.

ACIF also calls on Federal and State Governments to align their procurement policies so far as these regulate workplace relations. At present, there are conflicting regimes of government procurement policies which contain potentially conflicting provisions. This step would assist the task of building and construction industry workplace reform, as the ABCC would oversee the application of the disciplines imposed.

ACIF is aware that it is Labor Party policy to abolish the ABCC, and believes this would be an unwelcome development for the industry. However, should this occur, ACIF would like to see the following functions of the ABCC retained in a new building regulator, regarding:

- Workplace Health and Safety
- Mechanisms to ensure the rule of law on construction sites
- Phoenix Taskforce
- Information for both employers and employees about their rights and obligations
- Labour market testing
- Security of payment
- Wages and entitlements

FOUR The implementation of an effective regime to be established to minimise the use of non-conforming building products.

ACIF welcomes the recommendations in the long-awaited December 2018 Senate report on non-conforming building products. ACIF requests that the Building Ministers' Forum implement the recommendations of this report.

Further, ACIF makes the following recommendations, largely in line with the industry-wide Construction Product Alliance:

1. That governments commit to completing the remaining actions of the Senior Officers Group's work on non-conforming building products (NCBPs). A timeframe and process are required.
2. That governments work with industry to communicate to relevant stakeholders the implications of the new state based NCBP laws as they are introduced. A range of guidelines on compliance need to be developed.
3. All jurisdictions take meaningful steps to harmonise their legislation on NCBPs to avoid differences for manufacturers and suppliers working across state borders.
4. That all jurisdictions agree to a specific format or range of formats that will be used to meet obligations for "required information" on building products.
5. Chain of responsibility legislation be enacted in all Australian states and territories.
6. Establish a taskforce comprised of key industry stakeholders and state and federal government agencies with a charter to develop a strategic plan which incorporates short, medium and long-term responses to the issue of non-conforming products (NCP).
7. Increase stakeholder awareness of third-party certification schemes as a tool for achieving product compliance.
8. Develop and operate a pilot to determine the feasibility of establishing a single building products register for compliant product based on industry and government certification schemes.
9. Evaluate the feasibility of building product legislation being enforced at point of sale.
10. State building authorities to review surveillance and audit activities and implement stronger penalty regimes to improve effectiveness in achieving compliance with the National Construction Code (NCC).