



media statement

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Strong deterrents for unlawful action must remain to ensure WA construction remains reliable

Statement by CCI Manager of Industrial Relations Policy, Marcia Kuhne.

Without the strong compliance powers and penalties deterring unlawful conduct, WA's reputation as a stable and reliable supplier of raw materials could be compromised.

In a submission to the Senate inquiry into the replacement for the Australian Building Construction Commissioner (ABCC), CCI calls for similar powers and penalties available to the ABCC to be retained as a deterrent for productivity sapping unlawful activity on worksites.

Over the last five years, industrial disputes in the construction and building industries have decreased, with unions improving their behaviour under a regime of strong deterrents. However, WA risks going back to dark days of institutionalised bad behaviour from unions which unduly held back projects in the State.

CCI supports a separate building and construction division to oversee industrial disputes after historically poor behaviour from unions in these industries. While the industry has seen improvements in recent times, there is still more that can be achieved to enhance WA's reputation as a stable place to attract infrastructure investment.

CCI's recommendations include:

- The current penalties remain in the new legislation to ensure strong deterrents for unlawful activity;
- The investigative powers currently available to the ABCC remain; and
- The ability to 'switch off' investigative powers should only come after a 5 year review period.

If strong deterrents against unlawful activity are not kept, WA could put a risk the massive pipeline of investment in building and construction in the State.

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