



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE**Three years on from Opal Tower, building defects still crippling homeowners****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****25 February 2022**

The NSW Upper House Public Accountability Committee today tabled the report for its further inquiry into the regulation of building standards in New South Wales. The inquiry was a follow up to its 2019-2020 inquiry, the catalyst for which was the Opal Tower and Mascot Tower calamities, and the Grenfell Tower disaster.

Committee Chair, Mr David Shoebridge MLC, stated, 'After hearing directly from homeowners who continue to be financially crippled due to building defects, we are more convinced than ever that the sector needs a Building Commission as the single, fully empowered state regulator.'

'The committee heard multiple instances of the devastating financial and emotional consequences that flow from building defects. Three years ago it was the catastrophic human impact of serious defects in the Opal Towers and Mascot Towers developments; this time it is the Imperial Towers and Skyview developments, and the financial collapse of Privium Homes. While much of the attention on defects has been directed at apartments, disturbingly similar problems have been uncovered in the traditional housing sector,' Mr Shoebridge continued.

'A key message is that the 'light touch' approach to regulation in this state has allowed poor building standards to continue. The hopelessly ineffective and splintered regulation of building standards must be consolidated in a single, well-resourced and empowered Building Commission. The Committee found the recently delivered protections for new apartment buildings must urgently be extended to all new housing builds including single-dwelling homes, to ensure protection for all homeowners.'

'The broken legislative framework must also be addressed once and for all. The NSW Government must establish a single, senior Building Minister with responsibility for building regulation, including administering a new stand-alone Building Act. The Committee found that Fair Trading had failed in its responsibility to effectively regulate to protect homeowners from unscrupulous developers and building defects. The government must move regulatory responsibility for the building and construction industry from NSW Fair Trading to the Building Commission, with a fundamentally different culture of enforcement and compliance, to protect consumers and restore confidence in the industry,' concluded Mr Shoebridge.

The committee report and other inquiry documents, including submissions and hearing transcripts, are available on the inquiry [webpage](#).

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For further information please contact Committee Chair, Mr David Shoebridge MLC, on 9230 3030