

Submission  
No 139

**INQUIRY INTO REGULATION OF BUILDING  
STANDARDS, BUILDING QUALITY AND BUILDING  
DISPUTES**

**Organisation:** Penrith City Council

**Date Received:** 2 August 2019

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## **Submission to the Legislative Council Public Accountability Committee**

Dear Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the inquiry into the regulation of building standards, building quality and building disputes. The following comments are made in response to Terms of Reference.

### **BUILDING STANDARDS**

Presently there are no requirements for tradespeople and contractors to be accredited or hold professional indemnity insurance for work undertaken on our larger residential buildings. We believe all building practitioners involved in the construction process should be accredited and have appropriate levels of professional indemnity insurance to ensure they have the appropriate skills and knowledge to undertake their relevant trade and are accountable for any defects that occur as a result of the work they have undertaken.

### **CRITICAL STAGE INSPECTION REGIME**

Currently certifiers are only required to inspect a minimum number of stages of a building under construction, the number of critical stage inspections varies depending upon the class of building. It would appear that there is a stricter inspection regime in place for a single detached dwelling than for a residential flat building. In view of some of the defects being identified in some residential flat buildings it may be worthwhile expanding the critical stage inspection regime to include additional inspections and allow other professionals such as structural engineers to be accredited and sign off on structural aspects such as footings and reinforced concrete slabs.

### **CONSUMER PROTECTION**

Home owners and purchasers of apartment units deserve better protection against building defects than is currently offered. Developers and builders can employ tradespeople who are unlicensed, uninsured and unqualified to work on large multi storey buildings which have less insurance and quality control available than that afforded to a detached dwelling. 2% of the building costs are required to be set aside as a bond for the repair of any defects associated with the building. The costs of replacing combustible cladding on some buildings in recent times indicates that the 2% bond is inadequate, we believe that the bond should be increased to a minimum of 10%.

The above issues are raised in the interest of providing additional protection to the public and working towards a more robust building regulation system.

Yours faithfully,

Penrith City Council