

### Tagara project involvement raises questions to be answered

Fundamental changes are needed if Tullio Tagliaferri and John Kassara can continue to operate with more than \$27 million owing after their corporate collapse, Master Builders SA says.

Chief Executive Officer Ian Markos said *The Advertiser's* revelations that company directorships were transferred to family members in the days before Tagara Builders collapsed is a slap in the face to the businesses struggling to rebuild.

“A \$27 million collapse doesn't come as a surprise, it doesn't sneak up on you – unless you're owed the money and have kept working in good faith. It's the subbies and suppliers who are now struggling to make ends meet after being hit by this, and we will continue to help and support our subcontractor members wherever possible,” he said.

“We understand a number of people have already visited the site to express their frustration to Tullio and John. Master Builders SA understands and shares the anger, but to be clear, we absolutely condemn any violence or intimidation.

“There are larger issues at stake. We know Consumer and Business Services cut back their building licensing capacity in the wake of the collapse of Tagara Builders, but if Tullio and John are back on site with safety questions raised then we need to review South Australian licensing. We need to agree on our understanding of what it means to be a 'fit and proper person' in the building industry – because there is fair opinion that this isn't it.

“The collapse of Tagara Builders has been cited as a reason for proposals to significantly change contracting rights and impose new administrative demands under the Security of Payment Act. We would hate for the wrong reforms to be enacted for the right reasons. Any reform needs to reflect the impact on the whole industry and reject the imposition of additional costs for questionable outcomes.

“We commend Small Business Minister Martin Hamilton-Smith for actively working with us on our reform package, [Improving the South Australian Construction Industry](#). Some of the Small Business Commissioner's Security of Payment proposals have already been ruled out by that document, which reflects an agreed position by subcontractors and headcontractors in considering what will work on the ground. If we don't approach this as an industry, the most popular construction equipment will be a stapler for all the new paperwork.”

SafeWork SA had a strong role to play in ensuring the project in question answered safety concerns.

**Ends**

#### For further information

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#### Available for interviews

Ian Markos, Chief Executive Officer