

# Media Release



**MASTER BUILDERS**  
A U S T R A L I A

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## **Builders Welcome Recommitment To Strong Building Industry Regulator**

Master Builders Australia welcomes the Coalition's re-stated commitment to deliver the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC).

"The ABCC is crucial to the future of the building and construction industry," Wilhelm Harnisch CEO of Master Builders said.

"Restoring the rule of law will help the sector have safe and productive workplaces, free from bullying, thuggery, coercion and other stand-over tactics for which building unions are renowned," he said.

"Three Royal Commissions, dozens of inquiries and reports, hundreds of court cases, over \$10 million in fines – yet things are getting worse. There are over 100 building union officials facing over 1000 separate charges and we have more illegal strikes than any other industry," he said.

"You wouldn't cop bullying, abuse or threats at the pub, footy match, or in the street – let alone in a workplace – yet it happens every day on building sites right around the country, and women aren't immune," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"Building unions think the law doesn't apply to them. They cause delays and blow-outs which means essential community infrastructure – hospitals, roads, schools, aged-care homes – cost about 30% more than it should," he said.

"We need a strong regulator. The ABCC worked before and it will work again. We want building sites to be just like every other normal workplace," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

Master Builders calls on all parties to support the return of the ABCC and outlined other measures that the next Federal Government should also consider to help the industry restore the rule of law, including:

- Ensuring the Building Code 2014 is applied and drug and alcohol testing remains mandatory;
- Introducing laws to protect regulators and public officials from being hindered or abused by building unions;
- Requiring union officials to pass a 'fit and proper person' test before they get issued with a right of entry permit;
- Giving the ABCC a role in identifying phoenix-like behaviour, allegations of sham contracting, and breaches of competition laws such as secondary boycotts; and
- Keeping and expanding the Joint Police Taskforce established under the Heydon Royal Commission.

"Re-establishing the ABCC is a start but more needs to be done and more can be done," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

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