

2017 Better
Regulation
Taskforce
Report

Queensland Government Response and Action Plan

March 2019

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1.0 Introduction

The Queensland Government welcomes the first report (the Report) from the Better Regulation Taskforce (BRT) and thanks the members of the Taskforce for their efforts in developing the Report, including their engagement with small business stakeholders to inform the key findings and recommendations.

The Government's establishment of the BRT in 2017 as a sub-committee of the Queensland Small Business Advisory Council was an important step in helping inform the Government's development of policy options to reduce the regulatory burden faced by Queensland small business owners.

The Report presents the findings and recommendations of a review into the following three priority industry sectors:

- eco-tourism;
- live music entertainment; and
- startups.

While the Report focuses on these three industry sectors, many of the findings and recommendations outlined in the Report may help identify reform opportunities that could deliver benefits more broadly to small and medium businesses across all sectors of the economy.

The Report and the Government's response to it also form a key element of a broader commitment by the Queensland Government to address business red tape and to create a balanced regulatory environment conducive to strong, profitable, and globally competitive businesses.

Driving ongoing regulatory reform and red tape reduction is a key component of the Government's Economic Plan, as reducing costs and the regulatory burden on business and the community increases productivity and competitiveness, thereby boosting economic growth and creating job opportunities.

2.0 Queensland Government reforms to reduce red tape for small business

Since February 2015, the Palaszczuk Government has undertaken significant regulatory reform activities, with key elements of the Government's regulatory red tape reduction efforts focussed on small business. In 2016, the Government established the Red Tape Reduction Advisory Council (RTRAC) (re-established in 2017 as the BRT) to report on regulatory areas of concern to small business and to assist the Government in providing a business environment conducive to strong, profitable and globally competitive businesses.

Substantial progress has been made implementing the RTRAC recommendations, including the development of a revised regulatory framework focused on risk based regulation and a regulator behaviour framework requiring regulators to report annually against relevant performance indicators.

In addition to implementing initiatives in response to the RTRAC and BRT reviews, the Government is also implementing a range of significant other small business reform initiatives as part of its ongoing commitment to reduce red tape.

Examples of key regulatory reforms introduced or currently being progressed by Queensland Government agencies that will provide ongoing benefits to small businesses and that are aligned with the key themes outlined in the Report to January 2019 include:

Reducing costs of identifying and understanding regulations (reducing search costs)

- Small businesses including startups will be supported by various initiatives that are part of the National Business Simplification Initiative (NBSI), which aims to help simplify the process of operating a business in Australia through collaborative projects between federal, state and territory governments. This includes the following projects led by the **Department of Employment, Small Business and Training** (DESBT):
 - o *Integration of Commonwealth and state digital capabilities to support simplification of business services:* Under this project, DESBT has been collaborating with the Australian Government, and other state and territory governments, to share information and identify regulatory opportunities that will limit compliance requirements on small and medium enterprises.
 - o A key outcome of this collaboration has been the launch of a new look Australian Business Licence and Information Service (ABLIS) website on 14 September 2017 as part of the ABLIS NextGen project. The new look website makes it easier for small businesses to find information about their compliance requirements in relation to starting and growing a business and has a simpler more user-friendly design. Future improvements will include more intuitive search and content functionality.
 - o *Improving regulator engagement with small business in Queensland:* Under this project, DESBT collaborated with the Australian Government on undertaking a survey of industry bodies and business organisations to determine how well government communicates and engages with businesses on

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regulatory information. A key focus of the project was identifying ways to improve how government agencies disseminate information on regulatory requirements to small business.

- The **Office of Fair Trading's** (OFT) Digital Transformation Initiative is aimed at enhancing its digital presence in regard to services offered to its clients with the goal to improve the quality and accessibility of Government services, while reducing the time taken to finalise the interaction. This includes a number of business activities, including provision of secure online access and using QGOV for clients to lodge applications, renewals and consumer complaints, checking the status of applications, and submitting requests electronic licences and certificates. This saves time for clients, reduces processing time for applications and increases accuracy of held data.

Commencing in 2017, the digital transformation initiative has now become core business for OFT service offerings rather than a project initiative with defined end dates. As the online system is available 24/7, an additional benefit is that small business owners who may not have time to complete their statutory obligations and other business with the OFT during regular office hours, can undertake these activities at a time convenient to them. Industries that can currently interact online are: real estate, resident letting, motor dealers, security collection agents (debt collectors), second-hand dealers, charities and incorporated associations

Clients can also request replacement certificates or licences; request an extract of information about a licensee or corporation, incorporated association or cooperatives; get a copy of a certificate for an incorporated association, charity, registered fundraiser or cooperative; and submit audit reports and consumer complaints online.

Remaining services will continue to be migrated into the online channel in the future, as well as enhancements to current service offerings.

- The **Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning** (DSDMIP) has implemented an online portal for applicants to lodge their State Development Areas (SDA) application or request. This initiative has reduced costs and saved time for business, as the online portal provides an easy to follow process with handy advice to ensure that the applicant provides all the information required for assessment to be undertaken by the Coordinator-General. It includes an opportunity for the applicant to consider including a request for a full or part fee waiver as part of their application. The project became fully operational in January 2018.
- The **Department of Housing and Public Works** (DHPW) has implemented changes which have improved and streamlined the Queensland Building and Construction Commission's (QBCC) progress payment and adjudication processes to streamline the processes and allow subcontractors to take action to resolve payment disputes faster. The reforms reduce the time delays for subcontractors seeking payment for work performed and will be of particular benefit to subcontractors operating in the building and construction industry who are exercising their rights under the QBCC's adjudication process. These reforms took effect on 17 December 2018.

- **The Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries portfolio** (Safe Food Production QLD) redevelopment of the Safe Food website provides greater focus on simplification and ease of access to key food safety and application information in electronic form. It provides time and cost savings to applicants and businesses through improved access to required information through a contemporary central portal. Businesses benefit through more accessible and timely information, thereby reducing time and costs associated with accessing information. Industry sectors to primarily benefit are meat, dairy, eggs, seafood and seed sprout businesses.
- **Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs** (DLGRMA) led amendments to the Local Government Regulation 2012 and City of Brisbane Regulation 2012 to provide Local Governments with the option of providing the rating category statement to a ratepayer by hyperlink on the Council's website. This benefits ratepayers (including small businesses) who receive their rate notices electronically, reduces the likelihood of undeliverable rate notices and allows customers to use less mobile data in downloading attachments. Further it enhances a Local Government's capacity to remain responsive to customer needs and ensure it utilises the most contemporary technological options.
- The **Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors** (DCDSS) Online Concessions Card Service makes it easier for seniors to apply for a Seniors Card and access multiple concessions from the one place. The initiative reduces costs and saves time for the business and clients by eliminating duplication of information and simplifying the application process for concessions. Energy retailers will benefit from onboarding to the initiative in terms of streamlining their services which will result in improved customer experience, customer satisfaction and reduced processing against eligibility for concessions.

Reducing costs of complying with regulations (reducing compliance costs)

- **Queensland Treasury's** (Office of State Revenue) Transformation Program will deliver a services model for the future by enhancing client centric and digital service offerings for Queenslanders. The Program will re-shape the way OSR works with clients by making it easier to do business with OSR and reducing red tape. Specifically, the Program will offer clients:
 - o an online digital chat service that will respond to routine enquiries 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
 - o an online client web-portal that will enable self-service;
 - o personalised client services that are enhanced by data analytics and machine learning;
 - o a low touch taxation approach through targeted education campaigns and improved data quality and client validation; and
 - o increased internal efficiencies that will remove work backlogs and lead to more efficient and value-adding client services.

The OSR Transformation Program includes the Intelligent Virtual Assistant 'Sam' which went live on Payroll Tax related webpages in February 2018 and all remaining revenue lines (Land Tax, Duties and Grants, Betting Tax, Mining and Petroleum Royalties) in July 2018. Since February, Sam has logged more than 10,000 client interactions, with over 80 per cent of enquiries being resolved at the first contact.

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- Small business operators such as taxi licence holders, limousine operators, or booked hire licence holders benefit from the uniform inspection requirements established through the personalised transport reforms, led by **Department of Transport and Main Roads** (DTMR). Programmed Vehicle Inspections (PVI) for taxis, limousines and booked hire vehicles were transitioned from six monthly to annual inspections, and businesses are allowed to choose between an inspection from a government inspection station or a third-party provider. This has resulted in a halving of inspection costs and reduced the impact on productivity caused by having a vehicle off-road for the inspection. The option to use a third-party provider provides flexibility to personalised transport businesses when choosing where to have their vehicles inspected. The increased number of service providers has reduced the waiting time and provided more flexibility to obtain an inspection outside of normal business hours. These reforms commenced in October 2017.
- Dog breeders will benefit from **Department of Agriculture and Fisheries** (Biosecurity Qld) led reforms to the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* to provide for the prescription of organisations that accredit dog breeders as an approved entity. Local governments that licence or permit are also able to become an approved entity. The inclusion of approved entities under the Act means their members are exempt from the state-wide dog breeder registration. This reduces the administrative burden on approved entity members. When fees for the state-wide dog breeder registration are considered, members of approved entities will gain further benefits through not being required to pay for registration.
- The **Department of Education's** (DoE) Education (Overseas Students) Act 2018 provides a new regime for the regulation of providers of courses to overseas students and international student exchange programs. The amendments removed the requirement for a separate Queensland register, removed the separate registration of courses, and aligned the criteria to be considered when deciding whether to approve a provider with the criteria the Director General needs to consider under the Commonwealth Act. These reforms will benefit state and non-state schools that provide education to overseas students.
- The **Department of Environment and Science's** (DES) Macropod lodgement and assessment initiative develops the ability for businesses and individuals involved in the macropod trade (harvesting and dealing) to be able to apply for their necessary licences online, through a digital platform - Connect. The initiative also allows for businesses and individuals to order tags, order and completed movement advices and keep record books in Connect, removing some of the manual administrative burden on both the licensee and the department. The ability to apply for a licence online and record administrative requirements online will deliver benefit to small businesses, reducing the time taken to complete manual processes. This initiative was delivered in June 2017.
- The **Department of Housing and Public Works** (DHPW) is currently working towards completing a review of the regulatory framework for plumbing and drainage in Queensland. The review will result in a new Act, Regulation and revised code. The aim of the review is to promote efficiencies, cut red-tape, promote regulatory reduction initiatives (primarily around the reduction of permit and approval timeframes) and reduce construction costs to make ownership of housing more affordable without increasing risk. Queensland home owners could save an estimated \$640 in holding costs by being able to commence plumbing work 18 days earlier.

The construction industry, building and plumbing licensees are also expected to benefit via reduced on-site construction times. Plumbing licensees may perform more installations or work in a calendar year due to the compressed approval model which will deliver approvals faster, resulting in faster construction times. The Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018 was assented to on 10 September 2018 and DHPW is finalising the Regulation and code in consultation with industry and anticipating commencement by mid 2019.

- The **Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy** (DNRME) is seeking to reform the annual safety report requirement for petroleum and gas operators and replace this with on-line real-time reporting of safety critical information. This will modernise and streamline safety reporting requirements currently required in an annual safety report. This amendment will reduce regulatory burden for operators and ensure the most up to date contact details and other safety related information about petroleum and gas operations is available at all times. All petroleum and gas operators will benefit from this reform which is currently being progressed for proposed implementation in 2019.

Reducing regulatory barriers to entry (enhancing competition)

- Tourism small businesses including ecotourism operators will be supported by the Adventure and Nature Based Tourism Program, where the **Department of Environment and Science** (DES) in partnership with DITID, supports the development of new ecotourism projects, ensuring they are commercially viable, environmentally sustainable and in the public interest. This approach saves tourism businesses time and money to develop proposals, instead being able to invest in the proposal at the implementation stage, when competitive tenders are released. This will reduce costs on business with government developing products, obtaining approvals and delivering a product ready for construction and operation. An Expression of Interest process is underway for three proposed ecotourism opportunities on Hinchinbrook Island (Thorsborne Trail), the Cooloola Great Walk (Noosa) and Whitsunday Island Trail. Shortlisted proponents will then be invited to develop detailed proposals.
- The **Department of Education** (DoE) has led the redesign of the Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) initiative which aims to ease administrative burden for schools and OSHC suppliers. The changes will allow suppliers to respond with a reduced set of documentation and simplified terms and conditions of agreement. These changes also allow schools to more easily evaluate the supplier's tender responses, and provide an outcome to the industry of the tender in a timely manner. The new response forms will also improve the turnaround time in the creation of the licence as the licence will now form part of the response forms.

Many OSHC providers are small suppliers, without dedicated resources to complete tender submissions. These newly implemented processes will make it easier for small businesses to tender for the OSHC services in Queensland schools and will further support the priority within the Queensland Procurement Strategy (2017) to support Queensland suppliers and promote the capacity of regional Queensland businesses.

Following the finalisation of the new documentation suite in November 2018, DoE recently undertook the first competitive tender process for an outside school hours care service at Spring Mountain State School using the new documentation, with tenders closing on 6 February 2019 and offers currently under evaluation.

- The Business Impact Statement (BIS) initiative, established by **Department of Employment, Small Business and Training** (DESBT) includes two components: development of an online Impact Assessment Tool (IAT) and establishment of Small Business Consultation Panels (SBCPs). The IAT will assist policy analysts in considering the impact on small business of policy and regulatory design choices. The SBCPs will make it easier for agencies to consult with the small business community on the practical impacts of new or proposed policies. The BIS initiative will contribute to a regulatory environment that is more conducive to small business success in Queensland. Specifically, the IAT will assist policy analysts in considering the impact on small business of policy and regulatory design choices, and provide for greater consistency in the assessment of small business impacts across agencies by providing a standardised tool.

A pipeline of SBCP topics has been identified through engagement with departments and agencies across the Queensland Government. An expression of interest and due diligence process identified 80 small business owner/operators who are able to serve as panellists. Planning is underway for an initial pilot phase involving between six and eight SBCPs in early 2019. Learnings from the pilot will be rolled out progressively as part of ongoing SBCP. A communication plan has been developed to ensure an ongoing pipeline of topics is maintained.

- The **Department of Housing and Public Works** (DHPW) has established the new Queensland Information Technology Contracting framework (QITC) with the objective of allowing contracts to be formed more easily for emerging and innovative ICT products and services, including startups. The framework reduces the cost of doing business with government and reduces the administrative burden through simplifying the procurement process. It provides more streamlined contract templates making it easier for small business to contract with Government, saving time and money.
- The **Department of Housing and Public Works'** (DHPW) Building Construction and Maintenance Category (BCM) Strategy will educate stakeholders on how to work more effectively with available tools implemented as part of the BCM web presence project. The initiative will reduce business costs as suppliers will not have to tailor tender and contract management documentation on an agency specific basis. The initiative will reduce business time imposts as suppliers will have readier access to information on how to do business with government.

By facilitating cross-agency scheduling of works, regional business will benefit from less fluctuation in demand for government services, reducing recruitment costs and improving cashflow and viability. Business cost reductions through consistent and improved practice across the BCM category will lower entry barriers to small and local businesses. Industries or sectors to primarily benefit will be: trade contractors, specialist services, property and real estate services, materials and equipment suppliers, building operations, contractors. The BCM Web presence review was delivered in mid-2018 with identified improvements being made in late 2018 and early 2019.

3.0 Queensland Government Response and Action Plan

Following detailed consideration of the Report by all relevant Government departments, the Queensland Government will accept or substantially accept 6 of the 7 recommendations.

To drive implementation of the work program to be undertaken by agencies in response to the recommendations, a detailed action plan has been developed for each recommendation.

In line with the Government's key focus on supporting small business as a policy priority, the Government will be proactive in driving implementation of the response to the Report. To achieve this aim, specific timelines for reporting and implementing actions by agencies are outlined as part of the action plan.

Given its responsibilities for driving small business regulatory reform, DESBT will drive implementation of the response and any reforms as a matter of priority, with agencies being tasked with identifying and implementing any beneficial and appropriate reforms in these areas as soon as possible.

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Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>1: Implement proportionate approaches to liquor licensing regulation</p> <p>In regard to liquor licensing, the Queensland Government to:</p> <p>Improve current administrative processes associated with renewing liquor licences, including implementing more effective (i.e. non paper-based) notification methods and automatic payment processes, and issuing temporary licences where late payment occurs to allow venues to continue to operate until a formal licence is reissued.</p> <p>Adopt proportionate approaches to the regulation of noise, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) tiering noise regulations based on planning zones (applying less prescriptive requirements to commercial and mixed-use zones relative to residential zones) (b) removing the default noise limit for venues seeking to play live music during low risk times (e.g. between 9am and 9pm), subject to planning zones, and the requirement for businesses to seek noise limit relaxations from OLGR during these times (c) removing mandatory requirements to measure and record decibel readings on an ongoing basis (except where sustained non-compliant behaviour deems such requirements necessary) (d) examining alternative approaches to noise measurement (such as the approach used in the Valley special entertainment precinct) to provide greater certainty to venues and limit the impact of new residential developments on existing venues (e) increasing the number of people required to authorise a complaint to avoid the disproportionate impact of 'one neighbour'. <p>Identify opportunities, through an independent review, to adopt more proportionate approaches to liquor licensing regulation more broadly.</p> <p>Such a review could be undertaken by the Queensland Productivity Commission (QPC), with a clear terms of reference that prioritises the reduction in unnecessary regulatory burden, improves the consistency of regulatory oversight, and ensures the policy objectives of the government continue to be met.</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIALLY ACCEPT</p> <p>The Queensland Government supports a balanced approach to liquor licensing which keeps Queenslanders safe and appropriately manages excessive noise without placing undue regulatory burden on small businesses in the live music and hospitality sectors.</p> <p>The efficient administration of the liquor licensing process is an important part of this support. This is why annual fee advice, licence condition information and online payment options are available 24/7 through the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation's (OLGR) online portal.</p> <p>The OLGR also ensures that licensees are aware of the obligation to pay an annual fee. These efforts begin with broad industry-wide social media campaigns, email advices and traditional paper-based notifications, and escalate to phone calls and personal visits if the fee remains unpaid as the cancellation date approaches.</p> <p>While OLGR already provides non-paper-based processes for payment of annual fees, as recommended by the BRT, it is not considered practical to implement automatic liquor licence fee payment because the calculation of fees requires self-assessment and verification.</p> <p>The Queensland Government's ongoing \$1.35 million independent evaluation of the Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence (TAFV) Policy is currently evaluating the extent to which the Queensland Government's Policy is achieving its objectives, one of which is balancing the interests of the liquor industry with a reduction in alcohol-fuelled violence. The evaluation includes a cost-benefit assessment of the TAFV Policy, including its effect on the night-time economy. The Government will need to consider the recommendations of the independent TAFV Policy evaluation before any further consideration of a broader review of liquor licensing.</p> <p>The Queensland Government is focused on ensuring the regulation of noise from licensed premises balances the interests of venue patrons and neighbouring residents and businesses. As such, licensees seeking to vary their licence conditions may apply to the Commissioner of Liquor and Gaming who will consider the location of the venue, relevant zoning, and the times at which entertainment will be conducted. The Commissioner assesses each case on its merits.</p> <p>Conditions requiring licensees to measure and record noise levels will, as now, not be set as a standard but will only be applied where necessary to assist the licensee in monitoring and managing noise. These conditions are generally set with the agreement of the licensee as part of a strategy to manage noise to prevent undue impact on the community. In consultation with acoustic consultants, the way these conditions are set and monitored will be updated to improve outcomes for both licensees and their neighbours.</p> <p>The Government believes that each member of the community has an equal right to not be unduly impacted by noise from licensed premises. The absence of multiple complainants does not minimise the impact of excessive noise, and some members of the community, particularly the vulnerable, may not be as active as others in pursuing their rights.</p> <p>The Government will continue to support the special entertainment precinct approach as provided for in the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i>.</p>	<p>Lead agency: DJAG</p> <p>Supporting agency: DPC</p> <p>DJAG has conducted additional social media campaigns to further raise awareness of the availability and functionality of the online portal in advance of, and during, the 2018 annual fee collection process.</p> <p>The 2018 annual fee collection process was supplemented by an email broadcast. This process will be repeated within the 2019 process.</p> <p>DJAG has commenced consultation with acoustic consultants and amendments to the relevant guideline, if appropriate, will be progressed by 30 June 2019.</p> <p>The Government will carefully consider the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the Tackling Alcohol-fuelled Violence Policy, including the effect of the Policy on the night-time economy. The final evaluation report is due to be provided to Government at the beginning of April 2019.</p>

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Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>2. Increase transparency and consistency in regulation of protected areas</p> <p>With a view to promoting the appropriate use of protected areas, including by businesses undertaking environmentally sustainable commercial activities, the Queensland Government (through Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service) to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make all relevant information in relation to Commercial Activity Permits (CAP) and Commercial Activity Agreements (CAA) available in a single online portal and proactively communicate this resource to industry. • Clearly communicate to industry the approach used to allocate permits and enter into agreements (i.e. a competitive or non-competitive process), the rationale for adopting the approach, and the total and available capacity of protected areas where a competitive allocation process is in place. • Finalise the process and timeframes for transitioning commercial tourism operators in high visitation national parks from CAPs to CAAs as soon as practicable (if this has not already occurred) and make this information available to incumbent and potential new operators. <p>Ensure that monitoring and enforcement activities are undertaken transparently and consistently, promoting industry confidence in the regulatory framework.</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <p>The Department of Environment and Science (DES) is currently investigating the feasibility of an integrated permitting and authority system. The proposed new Integrated Permitting System will provide a single portal for external applicants to manage all their commercial authorities, including CAP and CAA.</p> <p>DES has finalised development of The Procedural Guide – Expressions of Interest for commercial activities on QPWS-managed areas, which will guide the identification and selection of new or additional operators for commercial activities on protected areas to ensure a fair and open Expression of Interest (EOI) process.</p> <p>The Queensland Eco and Sustainable Tourism (QuEST) initiative on high visitation protected areas is being implemented in stages. Therefore, DES will take steps to ensure all stakeholders are aware of the status and timing of implementation of key elements of these reforms.</p> <p>DES undertakes monitoring and enforcement activities in a variety of ways, including the use of both a proactive and a reactive approach, to ensure laws and mandatory permit conditions are complied with. DES duly responds to information received from members of the public and industry stakeholders where allegations of non-compliance are made.</p>	<p>Lead Agency: DES</p> <p>DES is currently investigating the feasibility of an Integrated Permitting System.</p> <p>DES will provide appropriate training to industry on how to use any new system to better manage their authorities on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas.</p> <p>DES published the Procedural Guide – Expressions of Interest for commercial activities on QPWS-managed areas on DES's website in October 2018.</p> <p>DES will communicate directly with current operators to advise of schedule dates of implementation of QuEST at specific sites.</p> <p>The declaration of a prescribed commercial activity by the chief executive will be published on the department website and in local papers. The dates for the declaration are undetermined.</p> <p>DES is committed to ensuring that monitoring and enforcement activities are undertaken transparently and consistently and will continue to develop processes that will promote industry confidence.</p>

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Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>3. Facilitate local government reforms to small business regulation</p> <p>The Queensland Government to work with the Queensland Small Business Champion and other relevant bodies (such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland) to establish a Small Business Friendly Council Program in Queensland, including the dedication of resources and funding to support the program on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The initial area of focus should be addressing planning and development issues identified through this review, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring opportunities to adopt streamlined development application processes (or potential exemptions from requiring development approval) for low-risk applications in the ecotourism and live music entertainment sectors. • Supporting the live music entertainment sector through the incorporation of an 'agent of change' principle in local planning schemes (placing responsibility for noise attenuation on the entity responsible for the change), and where practicable supporting the establishment of special entertainment precincts in local planning schemes. 	<p>ACCEPT (Subject to local government support and further investigation by government)</p> <p>The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) is currently investigating the feasibility of implementing a program which provides a mechanism for coordination and facilitation of discussion between small business and local governments in regard to local government regulatory matters, and presents an opportunity to improve regulator engagement with the small business community in Queensland.</p> <p>The planning development matters identified in this recommendation are primarily local government responsibilities. However, the new planning framework for Queensland, which commenced on 3 July 2017 after extensive review and consultation across industries, local governments and the community, will help facilitate local government actions, where appropriate, to address the initial areas of focus identified.</p> <p>In particular, under the framework:</p> <p>(a) Local governments have a range of tools to facilitate ecotourism and live music uses in their planning scheme.</p> <p>(b) The <i>Planning Act 2016</i> continues the intent of the repealed <i>Sustainable Planning Act 2009</i> supporting local governments to set the level of assessment for development within their area of responsibility, including expedited processes for low-risk applications. Local governments also have the ability to make development 'accepted' which means that a development application does not need to be submitted for assessment.</p> <p>(c) The incorporation of an 'agent of change principle' and the establishment of Special Entertainment Precincts is at the discretion of local governments, in consultation with their local communities.</p>	<p>Lead Agencies: DESBT</p> <p>Supporting agency: DSDMIP/DLGRMA</p> <p>DESBT will lead a program of work to investigate the feasibility and appropriate scope of establishing a program to provide a mechanism for coordination and facilitation of discussion between small business and local governments in regard to local government regulatory matters in Queensland.</p> <p>DESBT will provide a report to Queensland Treasury outlining the recommendations from the investigation into the program by September 2019.</p> <p>DSDMIP will consider the findings of the report and consider any appropriate options for the state to further support local government in plan-making and development assessment.</p>

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Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>4. Introduce a transfer duty exemption for genuine business restructures</p> <p>The Queensland Government to introduce a transfer duty exemption for the transfer of business assets that occurs as part of a genuine restructure. Consideration should be given to aligning the definition of a genuine restructure to that used by the ATO as part of the small business restructure rollover.</p>	<p>FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION</p> <p>There is a general duty exemption for corporate reconstructions in Queensland which applies to transfers of properties within a corporate group for the sole purpose of changing a corporate structure. It is noted that the ATO small business restructure rollover represents a deferral of taxation, rather than an exemption.</p> <p>The broad range of structures which a business may be held in means that careful consideration is required to determine whether provisions could cater for genuine restructures, while establishing appropriate conditions to prevent avoidance of duty.</p> <p>To inform any further consideration by the Government of this recommendation, further consultation will need to be undertaken with the Better Regulation Taskforce regarding the types of transactions that are within the scope of their request, along with the benefits that could be expected to be realised by Queensland businesses.</p>	<p>Lead Agency: Queensland Treasury</p> <p>QT will consult further with the BRT to inform any further Government consideration of this recommendation. This will include further clarifying key elements of the proposal, including how it would support business growth in Queensland, and identifying further details of the specific nature of transactions to which it could apply.</p>

Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>5. Pilot a regulatory sandbox program</p> <p>The Queensland Government to investigate piloting a regulatory sandbox program, choosing one area of state-based regulation, based on a transparent set of criteria, for which businesses can apply to be granted a fixed-term exemption with associated conditions.</p> <p>Should such a pilot prove successful, the Queensland Government should consider the broader adoption of a conditions-based regulatory exemption framework, similar to what has been previously proposed by the Productivity Commission.</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <p>The Queensland Government supports the investigation of piloting a regulatory sandbox program.</p> <p>DESBT, in collaboration with the Queensland Small Business Champion, will undertake an investigation of similar programs, such as the New South Wales Regulatory Sandbox initiative, and the ASIC Fin Tech Sandbox initiative, to determine feasibility for implementation in Queensland.</p>	<p>Lead Agency: DESBT</p> <p>Supporting Agencies: QT/DITID</p> <p>DESBT will lead an investigation into a regulatory sandbox program, and undertake consultation with the New South Wales Government, the Australian Government and relevant Queensland regulators to determine the feasibility of implementing the program in Queensland.</p> <p>DESBT will provide a report to Queensland Treasury outlining all options identified to develop a regulatory sandbox program in Queensland, including recommendations regarding development of a pilot program, by September 2019.</p>

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Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>6. Develop targeted information for startup businesses</p> <p>The Queensland Government to further develop the Business Queensland site to provide information specific to regulatory issues faced by startup businesses in Queensland. Where possible, this content should link to existing information sources (including how to access available mentoring programs).</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <p>DESBT has undertaken significant enhancements to the Business Queensland website to make it easier for businesses to find the regulatory and compliance information they need. The website now includes information from 15 Queensland Government departments, and was visited by more than 4.7 million customers in 2016-17 and continues to grow.</p> <p>A Business Queensland Roadmap is currently being developed. The Roadmap will chart a course for the future of the Business Queensland website over the medium term and explores potential technological advancements, content expansions and customer-focused improvements to ensure the website continues to grow in readership and maintains its reputation as the key information source for business owners and intenders, and industry in Queensland.</p> <p>The Roadmap will support Queensland startup businesses to better access and navigate regulatory information.</p>	<p>Lead Agency: DESBT</p> <p>Support Agency: DITID</p> <p>DESBT will work with the Innovation team at DITID to ensure Business Queensland better meets the needs of Queensland's ICT startup industry.</p> <p>This will include updating information currently contained on the website and improving access to a range of relevant services offered by the Australian Government including ABLIS. Having a single location to access information across all levels of government will better assist Queensland's startup businesses grow and employ.</p> <p>A majority of this work was delivered by June 2018. DESBT is continuing to develop the Business Queensland website further with the addition of ICT Start-up Environments and Incubator information expected to be delivered by the end of March 2019.</p>

Recommendation	Government Response	Action Plan
<p>7. Establish the Queensland Government as an exemplar buyer from small business</p> <p>The Queensland Government to build on steps already taken to increase small business procurement by expanding the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. This expansion should ensure the continuation of SBIR as an ongoing program, with a sufficient government funding commitment.</p> <p>In addition, the Queensland Government should consider opportunities to embed elements of the SBIR framework in procurement policies more broadly. This could include encouraging agencies to adopt less prescriptive outcomes-based approaches to procurement, and adopting incremental or piloting procurement approaches, where appropriate.</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <p>The Queensland Government is committed to the continued delivery of the SBIR program which funds the research, development and testing of solutions to Government challenges, creating a level playing field for startups and small business who may not yet have a thoroughly tested and proven product.</p> <p>Through this program, applicants retain all intellectual property they develop and have the opportunity to secure the Government as a lead customer. This allows them to attract further funding and commercialise their solutions.</p> <p>The Queensland Government Procurement Strategy and Queensland Procurement Policy 2018 include a number of initiatives designed to promote innovation and increase opportunities for small businesses to become suppliers to the Queensland Government. Agencies were required to fully implement the revised Queensland Procurement Policy by 1 March 2018. To support implementation, guidance has and will continue to be progressively developed and released to government agencies. To specifically address this recommendation, the Office of the Chief Advisor - Procurement, will develop and release guidance on 'Pursuing outcome-based approaches in procurement'. The Procurement Industry Advisory Group has also been established for government and industry to discuss issues of strategic importance.</p> <p>In addition, on 1 June 2018, the Queensland Government released the Queensland Small Business Procurement Commitment consultation paper. Supporting the Queensland Procurement Policy, the release of the consultation paper demonstrates the Government's ongoing commitment to finding ways to help small businesses to better access the opportunities that participating in government procurement brings.</p> <p>The consultation period closed on 31 July 2018. Responses to the consultation paper are currently being considered and DESBT is working across government to finalise a Queensland Small Business Procurement Commitment and associated Action Statement. The Queensland Government looks forward to releasing its commitment in due course.</p>	<p>Lead Agencies: DITID & DHPW</p> <p>DITID will continue to release SBIR challenges to market as Queensland Government agencies identify complex problems.</p> <p>DHPW is committed to releasing guidance for government agencies on 'Pursuing outcome-based approaches in procurement' by mid-2019.</p>

Queensland Government Departments - list of abbreviations

DJAG – Department of Justice and Attorney-General

DESBT - Department of Employment, Small Business and Training

DSDMIP - Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

DHPW - Department of Housing and Public Works

DAF - Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

DLGRMA - Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs

DCDSS - Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

DTMR - Department of Transport and Main Roads

DET - Department of Education

DES - Department of Environment and Science

DNRME - Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

DPC – Department of the Premier and Cabinet

QT – Queensland Treasury

DITID – Department of Innovation and Tourism Industry Development

