

Ref: AD- 263855

18 September 2020

Mr Shane King MP
Chair
Transport and Public Works Committee
tpwc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr King,

RE: QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE AT PUBLIC BRIEFING ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Transport and Public Works Committee on 7 September 2020 to discuss the *Auditor-General Report 16: 2019-20: Licensing builders and building trades*. I am writing to provide information in response to the question I took on notice on education and engagement activities undertaken by the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC), with a particular focus on the Traeger electorate.

Under the *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991*, the QBCC has a legislative obligation to provide support, education and advice for consumers and those who undertake building work.

The QBCC takes this role seriously and has a dedicated Team whose primary role is to provide education and engagement activities throughout the state. In 2019/20, the QBCC undertook a wide variety of education and engagement activities including tradie tours, roadshows, webinars, information sessions and expos.

I welcome the Committee's interest in the education and engagement activities undertaken by the QBCC in rural and remote areas of Queensland, particularly in the Traeger electorate. While the QBCC recognises the importance of providing education and engagement opportunities to all licences, it unfortunately has limited capacity to physically deliver events in rural and remote areas.

As I am sure the Committee can appreciate, the QBCC has finite resources to spend on education and engagement activities, and therefore it is essential that these resources are used wisely and in ways that deliver the best outcomes for the whole building and construction industry in Queensland.

To this end, the vast majority of QBCC regional education activities which serviced the Traeger electorate (such as the tradie tours and roadshows) were held in key regional centres such as Townsville and Cairns.

The QBCC did deliver webinar presentations of the same topics delivered in the tradie tours and roadshows in 2019/20, in efforts to reach broader audiences including contractors in the Traeger electorate. Topics covered in these webinars included minimum financial requirements, annual reporting, amendments to mechanical services licensing, metal roofing and illegal phoenix activity.

The QBCC utilises a number of mediums to promote its education and engagement activities throughout Queensland in efforts to reach a broad audience. This includes promotion through email, social media, the QBCC's website, electronic newsletters, information displayed in regional offices, industry organisations distributing information to their members and local media.

Further to the above, I would also like to highlight the following for consideration by the Committee:

- As a risk-focused regulator, the QBCC focuses on those areas of greatest risk and potential harm. The vast majority of disputes, insurance claims and compliance cases received by the QBCC are from homeowners and industry participants located within southeast Queensland (refer to Table 1 in Attachment 1). The QBCC uses this type of data to ensure its education and engagement activities are focused in areas where we can help reduce the associated risk profile while also ensuring the best use of available resources.
- The QBCC's Regional Manager in Townsville aims to travel within the Traeger electorate at least once every year. For example, in February 2020, the Manager visited Mt Isa area for 4 days alongside representatives of Construction Skills Queensland (CSQ). A number of joint presentations and meetings were conducted including with Mt Isa TAFE, Mt Isa Council, QBuild, various local training providers and local building contractors.
- The QBCC has been unable to carry out face-to-face engagement activities throughout the majority of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The QBCC is considering a number of alternative engagements for delivering education and engagement activities throughout Queensland to ensure it continues to deliver on its legislative obligation.
- There are a number of factors that need to be considered when making decisions on where an event or activity should be held. To support the decision to hold an event in the Traeger electorate, the following factors would need to be considered:
 - The distances involved in travelling to the area and the time and resource requirements;
 - The target audience located in the area. Currently, approximately 1% of all QBCC licensees are located in the Traeger electorate. Further, 70% of the licensees located in the electorate fall within the financial category of SC1 or SC2 (ie have a maximum turnover of less than \$800,000 a year). Refer to Table 2 and 4 in Attachment 1.
 - The risk profile of the area. For example, the proportion of compliance cases that are being managed by the Townsville and Cairns offices (which includes the regional centres as well as the rural areas) represents only 10% of all compliance cases in Queensland (refer table 1 in Attachment 1), indicating a lower risk profile than more built up areas.
- It is likely that some licensees in the Traeger electorate have attended events in key regional centres, however the QBCC does not hold data on the location of attendees of any event to allow an analysis to be undertaken.
- The QBCC works alongside other stakeholder groups in efforts to provide additional support to licensees in rural and remote areas.
- The QBCC builds on its education and advice functions based on industry feedback and compliance outcomes.

I trust this information answers your enquiry. If you require further information or assistance with this matter, Ms Sharon Burton, Manager Industry Skills at the QBCC can be contacted on

Yours Sincerely,



Brett Bassett
COMMISSIONER
QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION

ATTACHMENT 1

Table 1: Distribution of cases throughout Queensland in 2019/20

QBCC Service Centre	Disputes ¹		Insurance ²		Compliance ³	
Brisbane	2,995	58.9%	737	57.3%	659	58.9%
Cairns	247	4.8%	55	4.3%	57	5.1%
Gold Coast	373	7.3%	73	5.7%	117	10.5%
Mackay	213	4.2%	73	5.7%	17	1.5%
Maryborough	182	3.6%	36	2.8%	36	3.2%
Rockhampton	184	3.6%	72	5.6%	37	3.3%
Sunshine Coast	396	7.8%	100	7.8%	87	7.8%
Toowoomba	227	4.5%	79	6.1%	49	4.4%
Townsville	270	5.3%	61	4.7%	60	5.3%
TOTAL	5,087	100%	1,286	100%	1,119	100%

¹ Dispute cases received in 2019/20, including defective work, non-completion, early dispute resolution, consequential damage, non-conforming building products, subsidence and pre-purchase building inspections

² Insurance claims received in 2019/20, including defective work, non-completion and subsidence

³ Compliance cases referred for investigation in 2019/20, including unlicensed contracting, domestic contract offences, excluded persons, fit and proper, and financial concerns (note regional service centres do not investigate excluded persons, fit and proper or financial concerns).

Table 2: Proportion of all QBCC licensees located within the Traeger electorate

	Company		Individual		Total	
Traeger	227	1.1%	1,085	1.5%	1,312	1.4%
Queensland	20,164	100%	70,596	100%	90,760	100%

Table 3: Breakdown of active QBCC licensees in the Traeger electorate as at 14 September 2020

Financial Category	Company	Individual	Total	
SC1-SC2	124	800	924	70.5%
Cat 1-3	102	40	142	10.8%
Cat 4-7	1	0	1	0.0%
N/A	0	245	245	18.7%
Total	227	1,085	1,312	100%

* Business address in the Traeger electorate