

NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY FORUM MEETING

27 June 2025

Communiqué

The tripartite National Construction Industry Forum has today agreed on a process for formal endorsement of the draft 'Blueprint for the Future' by no later than September 2025.

Members also agreed that 9 of the 45 recommendations in the Blueprint should be prioritised for immediate action, once the Blueprint is formally endorsed.

The NCIF is the leading national tripartite forum in the building and construction industry, bringing together government, unions and business to promote best practice, address systemic problems and drive reform to industry culture.

Chair of the Forum, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, acknowledged the unprecedented unity and commitment shown by NCIF Members to address systemic challenges and reform the industry. The determination from industry leaders to drive real long-term change is reflected in the draft Blueprint, which identifies key challenges and sets out a forward workplan to address them.

Minister Rishworth, the Hon Clare O'Neil MP, Minister for Housing, and the Hon Andrew Giles MP, Minister for Skills and Training, outlined their portfolio responsibilities for the Albanese Government's second term. They highlighted key areas where the NCIF and the Blueprint will play a critical role. Priorities include boosting industry productivity for more homes and infrastructure, driving cultural change for the industry, building a skilled and adaptable workforce, and improving safety and women's participation.

The facilitator of the Blueprint, Dr Rod Harrison, was also in attendance and shared his reflections on the collaborative process to develop the draft Blueprint. Dr Harrison emphasised the high level of engagement, goodwill and collective wisdom that members brought to the process. Members thanked Dr Harrison for the significant role he played in delivering the Blueprint.

Blueprint priorities – First Tranche

The draft Blueprint contains 45 concrete recommendations for reform spanning 8 broad areas for action across the sector, namely:

- Collaboration and alignment
- Governance, lawfulness and compliance
- Regulation and procurement
- Skills, workforce and participation
- Financial viability
- Fragmented and project-based nature of industry ("industry projectification")
- Risk allocation
- Reporting and transparency

Members agreed that implementation of all the recommendations of the Blueprint is pivotal to addressing persistent challenges in the sector, including skills shortages, safety, productivity, and gender equality.

Members agreed that once the Blueprint is formally endorsed, the below 9 recommendations should be acted on as the first tranche of implementation of the Blueprint:

1. strengthening the role of the NCIF through increased resourcing to drive long-term structural reform
2. developing a new Joint Construction Industry Charter setting out clear shared goals and behavioural expectations
3. advising on best practice for procurement frameworks and settings, including the use of labour hire and reducing planning and approval red tape
4. developing advice on delivering safe, secure, well-paid jobs in the construction industry
5. advising on strengthening pathways into the construction industry, by identifying strategies to address structural barriers to entry
6. identifying best practice to address structural barriers to women's participation in the industry
7. improving worker mobility through nationally consistent skills accreditation, licensing and regulation
8. developing advice on effective security of payment arrangements for contractors throughout the supply chain
9. developing guidelines on appropriate risk management/risk allocation.

Members acknowledged the first tranche of priorities represent the need to commence action to address the broad range of challenges. Importantly, they reflect the diverse and legitimate interests of all Forum members, aligning with the NCIF's tripartite focus and commitment to collaborative reform.

Working effectively

Members agreed that existing reform initiatives should be leveraged wherever possible to avoid duplication. A key example highlighted by members was the work underway by Minister O'Neil to reduce red tape to turbocharge the delivery of housing.

Members confirmed that the work of the NCIF aligns with the government's broader productivity agenda, and the Blueprint should be incorporated into other relevant processes as appropriate, including the upcoming productivity roundtable, to avoid duplication.

Members acknowledged the essential role of the states and territories in the building and construction sector; and confirmed that they should be consulted as appropriate as the Blueprint process progresses.

Next steps

The NCIF agreed that a meeting would be held in September 2025 to formally endorse the Blueprint.

Attendees

The Chair, the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations

The Hon Clare O'Neil MP, Minister for Housing

The Hon Andrew Giles MP, Minister for Skills and Training

Mr Brent Crockford, Australian Owned Contractors

Mr Paul Farrow, Australian Workers' Union

Ms Robyn Fortescue, Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union

Mr Jon Davies, Australian Constructors Association

Mr Tony Callinan, Australian Workers' Union

Mr Oliver Judd, National Electrical and Communications Association

Ms Jocelyn Martin, Housing Industry Association

Ms Alison Mirams, Independent (formerly of Roberts Co)

Mr Nicholas Proud, Civil Contractors Federation

Ms Kristen Reid, Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union

Mr Zach Smith, Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union

Ms Denita Wawn, Master Builders Australia

Ms Lucy Weber, Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union

Mr Michael Wright, Electrical Trades Union

Mr Matthew Kandelaars, Property Council of Australia (Substitute for Mr Mike Zorbas)

Other participants

Mr Mark Irving KC, Administrator, Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union

Mr Michael Flinn, Deputy Chief of Staff, Administrator, Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union

Dr Rod Harrison, Principal Associate, Australian Business Lawyers and Advisors

Ms Natalie James, Secretary, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations

Ms Jessica Hall, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure Group, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

Apologies

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres, Minister for Industry and Innovation

The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

Mr Steve Murphy, Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union

Mr Mike Zorbas, Property Council of Australia

More information on the Forum is available at: <https://www.dewr.gov.au/australian-building-and-construction-industry/national-construction-industry-forum>.

Enquiries: NCIFSecretariat@dewr.gov.au.