

Monday, 3 November 2025

The Hon. Sam O'Connor MP  
Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Youth  
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## Leading best-in-class procurement across Government to ensure good outcomes for Queenslanders

Dear Minister,

On behalf of the Australian Institute of Architects (Queensland Chapter), I am pleased to provide our submission on Improving Procurement Practice on Queensland Government Projects.

The Institute warmly welcomes the Government's commitment to strengthening procurement practices to deliver better value and outcomes for Queenslanders. Our members see great potential for reform to improve efficiency, strengthen capability, and ensure public funds deliver lasting community benefit.

Our recommendations are solutions-oriented and designed to build on the good work already underway. We propose targeted improvements in three key areas:

### Executive Summary of Recommendations

1. Project Delivery – Lift capability, improve briefs, strengthen skills, and maintain continuity of design teams.
2. Project Planning – Provide certainty, set realistic budgets, allocate risk fairly, and apply procurement policy consistently.
3. Awarding Projects – Reward value over lowest cost, invest for long-term outcomes, involve industry in improvements, and build government expertise.

We also respectfully request that the architecture profession, as represented by both the Australian Institute of Architects (Queensland Chapter) and Association of Consulting Architects (ACA), particularly on procurement matters, be included as a member of the Procurement Ministerial Advisory Committee (PMAC). We bring deep expertise in design quality, risk management, and delivery, and stand ready to contribute constructively to this important reform.

Minister, procurement reform represents a real opportunity to achieve better projects, greater efficiency, and stronger industry capability. We look forward to working with you and your Department to make this vision a reality.

Kind regards,



Caroline Stalker  
Queensland Chapter President  
Australian Institute of Architects



Australian  
Institute of  
Architects



# LEADING BEST-IN-CLASS PROCUREMENT ACROSS GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE GOOD OUTCOMES FOR QUEENSLANDERS

Submission by the Australian Institute of Architects  
(Queensland Chapter) to the Minister for Housing and  
Public Works and Minister for Youth

**QUEENSLAND CHAPTER**

Submission: November 2025

## INTRODUCTION

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The Australian Institute of Architects (Queensland Chapter) welcomes the Queensland Government's commitment to improving procurement. Good procurement practice is not only about efficient processes; it is about delivering quality public projects that stand the test of time, meet community needs, and provide value for money.

Our members bring decades of experience working across Queensland Government projects in housing, education, justice, and health. Their insights highlight where current practices fall short and, more importantly, where targeted improvements can deliver real benefits for both government and community.

## PROJECT DELIVERY – BUILDING CAPABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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### Current Challenges

Project delivery is often hindered by uneven capability and unclear processes. Architects regularly encounter:

- Unskilled or unlicensed project managers, leading to coordination issues and costly rework.
- Vague or inconsistent briefs, where terms such as “schematic design” or “preliminary design” are applied inconsistently.
- Compressed design timeframes, particularly under Design & Construct (D&C) procurement, limiting opportunities for refinement.
- Loss of continuity when design teams are not retained through delivery, resulting in reduced quality, loss of embedded project knowledge, and fewer training opportunities for graduates.

These challenges lead to higher costs, more risk, and diminished public outcomes.

### Solutions

- Set minimum competency standards for project managers on government projects, building accountability.
- Align procurement documentation with industry standards, improving clarity and reducing misunderstandings.
- Provide targeted training for procurement officers and project managers in architectural workflows.
- Maintain continuity of design teams across all phases, including contract administration, to safeguard quality and sustain graduate pathways to registration.

## PROJECT PLANNING – CREATING CERTAINTY AND FAIRNESS

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### Current Challenges

Poor planning has flow-on effects across the entire system. Common issues include:

- Tender and project cancellations, wasting months of work and significant private resources, particularly harming regional and small practices.
- Budgets set too low at Cabinet Budget Review Committee (CBRC), resulting in inevitable blowouts and misaligned expectations.
- Unrealistic consultant fees, which undermine quality and discourage capable firms from tendering.
- Inconsistent procurement approaches across agencies, creating confusion and undermining confidence in government processes.

This creates inefficiency, erodes trust, and adds cost to taxpayers.

### Solutions

- Strengthen pipeline planning and CBRC oversight to minimise project cancellations and set realistic expectations.
- Establish budgets and fee ranges that match project scale and complexity, ensuring quality can be delivered.
- Allocate risk fairly, so each party is accountable for what they can reasonably control.
- Apply procurement policy consistently across all agencies, with oversight and enforcement to ensure fairness and transparency.

## AWARDING PROJECTS – FOCUSING ON LONG-TERM VALUE

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### Current Challenges

The way projects are awarded directly shapes outcomes. Current practice often over-emphasises upfront cost at the expense of quality and long-term value. This creates:

- Lowest-price bias, which discourages capable firms and leads to compromised design outcomes.
- Missed opportunities to assess capability, track record, and design quality.
- Limited understanding among procurement staff of design workflows and risk, making it difficult to assess tenders effectively.

This approach results in higher long-term costs, greater risk, and diminished public value.

## Solutions

- Broaden assessment criteria to reward capability, experience, and design quality—not just cost.
- Shift procurement culture towards whole-of-life value, recognising that investment in quality reduces risk and saves money over time.
- Involve industry in reviewing procurement templates and processes, ensuring frameworks are practical and reflect best practice.
- Provide procurement staff with training in architectural workflows and risk management, strengthening assessment and contract management capacity.

## OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

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### Project Delivery

- Establish minimum competency standards for project managers.
- Align procurement documentation with recognised industry standards.
- Provide targeted training for procurement officers and project managers.
- Ensure continuity of design teams across all phases, including contract administration.

### Project Planning

- Reduce project cancellations through clearer pipeline planning and stronger oversight.
- Establish realistic budgets and consultant fee structures.
- Allocate project risks fairly.
- Apply procurement policy consistently across agencies.

### Awarding Projects

- Broaden criteria to reward long-term value and design quality.
- Shift procurement culture towards whole-of-life value.
- Involve industry in reviewing frameworks and templates.
- Train procurement staff in design workflows and risk management.

## CONCLUSION

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These reforms are achievable, practical, and capable of delivering significant benefits. By focusing on capability, certainty, and value, Queensland can lead the nation in procurement practice—building better projects, strengthening industry, and ensuring public investment delivers enduring community value.