



13 May 2026

The Hon Joe Szakacs MP

Minister for Infrastructure and Transport

Email: Minister.Szakacs@sa.gov.au

Cc:

The Hon Nick Champion MP

Minister for Housing and Urban Development

Minister for Housing Infrastructure

Minister for Planning

Email: Minister.Champion@sa.gov.au

Dear Minister Szakacs,

Re: Fuel, transport and supply pressures impacting housing delivery and the built environment

The Royal Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) writes to share findings from a recent national pulse survey examining how fuel, transport and related supply pressures are affecting architectural practice, project delivery and the built environment across Australia.

The Institute is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia, representing more than 14,000 members across Australia and overseas.

The survey provides timely practitioner insight into how current cost and supply volatility is flowing through to project feasibility, delivery timing, professional sustainability and housing supply outcomes. Across responses, a clear pattern emerges: fuel and transport cost increases are contributing to supply disruption and material escalation, which are in turn affecting project confidence, project commencement and the viability of new work.

The findings indicate that:

- 62 per cent of practices report current impacts
- 57 per cent report impacts on project sign-up, client decision-making or commencement timing
- 53 per cent report pressure on fees, scope or commercial sustainability
- 64 per cent report concern about increased risk of product or material substitution.

Practices described projects being paused, delayed, redesigned or reconsidered as costs and uncertainty increase. Responses also point to growing pressure on practice viability, particularly



where additional work is being absorbed without corresponding adjustments to fees or scope. The survey suggests these pressures are now affecting not only how projects are delivered, but whether they proceed at all.

These conditions have direct implications for government priorities, particularly housing supply, construction productivity and delivery certainty. They also raise concerns for quality and compliance where cost pressure results in late-stage product substitution or reduced design oversight.

The survey also highlights structural challenges in procurement and contracting. Fixed-price models were widely identified as increasingly misaligned with volatile market conditions, with risk being transferred down the supply chain to consultants and subcontractors who have limited ability to manage escalation in material, logistics and delivery costs.

Regional and outer-metropolitan practices reported disproportionate impacts, particularly in relation to transport costs, servicing projects and reduced access to materials and products.

In light of these findings, the Institute recommends that the Commonwealth consider the following actions:

- 1. Strengthen monitoring and engagement**
Better incorporate housing and construction delivery impacts into existing monitoring of supply chain and freight volatility, including input from the built environment sector.
- 2. Improve visibility and transparency**
Improve communication and market visibility around fuel, freight and material conditions to support better project planning and client decision-making.
- 3. Align procurement settings with current conditions**
Encourage more flexible procurement and contracting approaches that better reflect volatility, including more appropriate risk-sharing mechanisms and reduced reliance on rigid fixed-price arrangements.
- 4. Safeguard quality, compliance and long-term value**
Recognise the risks created by substitution, scope reduction and compressed delivery conditions, and reinforce the importance of design integrity, compliance and whole-of-life performance.
- 5. Support regional delivery and long-term resilience**
Recognise the disproportionate exposure of regional and outer-metropolitan areas to transport and supply pressures, while supporting longer-term resilience through more efficient, lower-emissions supply and delivery systems.

The Institute recognises that responsibility for these issues spans multiple portfolios and levels of government. We will continue to advocate across jurisdictions to support a coordinated and practical response.



We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and relevant departmental officers to discuss the findings and how these emerging pressures might be better reflected in government monitoring, procurement settings and housing delivery policy.

Ensuring that housing and infrastructure projects remain viable, well-designed and deliverable in the current environment is important not only to near-term supply, but to the quality, resilience and long-term value of the built environment.

Yours sincerely,

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Kirstie Coultas
SA Chapter President

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Craig Glasson
Executive Leader SA (interim)

Attachment: RAIA Survey Report Fuel Transport Supply Pressures, May 2026