

DATA PAINTS PICTURE OF QUEENSLAND IN CRISIS

Industry association for built environment firms, Consult Australia has today released data revealing thousands of staff cutbacks across Queensland, prompting calls for urgent government action to rebuild productivity.

The survey found over 60 per cent of Queensland firms have cut up to a third of their business in the past 12 months, with half anticipating they will employ no new staff in 2013/14.

The Association's Queensland State Manager, Stacey Rawlings has suggested this crisis is indicative of a contraction in government investment in infrastructure.

"The struggling built environment industry is an early indicator of what will become a serious problem for the state's economy, and it is critical that all spheres of government act immediately," said Ms Rawlings.

"The survey responses are indicative of over 2,000 staff redundancies across engineering, architecture, project management, quantity surveying and related professions in the past 12 months.

"Firms' lack of confidence in future investment means we are expecting more job losses every day.

"The decline in business confidence is palpable across the industry; nearly 90 per cent of respondents feel the government (state and federal) could be doing more to stimulate the economy."

Consult Australia said the results of the survey, covering firms employing some 5,000 staff across the state, should signal a stark wakeup call to government.

"Consult Australia is advocating for commonsense recommendations including a stronger infrastructure pipeline, new funds for investment, support for best practice procurement and the creation of a better business operating environment," said Ms Rawlings.

"With consulting services operating at the front-end of a long supply chain through resources, property and construction, these results should be taken very seriously.

"If nothing is done Queensland will see its advanced services sector professionals moving interstate and overseas, or into other industries.

"Targeted intervention will provide governments with an opportunity to build productivity and moderate the extremes of the boom/bust cycle.

"The strength of the Queensland economy which was built up in the last decade alone will not safeguard the state against significant damage.

"If current conditions continue to deteriorate, Queensland risks losing the best part of an industry 15 years in the making, and the status which has them at the envy of advanced economies across the world.

"This should be a trigger for the government to start working in close collaboration with business and industry to ensure the state pulls through.

"Consult Australia looks forward to working with the government to secure a more productive, prosperous future for Queensland through more competitive businesses, new jobs and a better built environment."

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MEDIA RELEASE



Driving Business Success for Consulting Firms in the Built and Natural Environment

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact QLD State Manager, Stacey Rawlings on (07) 3020 3403 or 0404 123 896 or via email at stacey@consultaustalia.com.au.

About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the leading not-for-profit association that represents the business interests of consulting firms operating in the built and natural environment.

Our member firms include: AECOM; Arup; Aquentia; Cox Architects; GHD; Hyder Consulting; Parsons Brinckerhoff; URS Australia; and WorleyParsons.

We represent an industry comprising some 48,000 firms across Australia, ranging from sole practitioners through to some of Australia's top 500 firms. Collectively, our industry is estimated to employ over 240,000 people, and generate combined revenue exceeding \$40 billion a year.