

## Industry despairs at 457 visa debate

The debate around the 457 visa program has been labelled misinformed, ad-hoc and politically driven by industry association, Consult Australia.

Consult Australia represents the design firms responsible for the delivery of major Australian infrastructure, many of whom are dependent on 457 visa workers to offset domestic skills shortages.

CEO of the Association, Megan Motto said the government needs to pay less attention to the media circus and invalidated claims of visa rorting, and direct its efforts towards proper consultation with industry and those with solid evidence on how the program operates in real life.

Ms Motto branded the rushed tabling of the Bill an example of the worst approach to policy development imaginable.

“Politicians including Bob Katter and Andrew Wilkie are weighing in on the debate to push their agenda without knowing the detail, and now risk, voting in a bill that doesn’t make sense,” said Ms Motto.

“We need a skilled migration program that is systematic and industry informed, not ad-hoc and politically driven.

“Skills shortages come and go, but the system is here for the long term. We need one that is flexible enough to meet the changing needs of the economy.”

### Ends

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For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact PR & Policy Coordinator, Gillian O’Young on (02) 9922 4711 or via email at [gillian@consultaustalia.com.au](mailto:gillian@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; Aquenta; 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.