



Opening Statement – Christopher Melham, Chief Executive Officer, Civil Contractors Federation National

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities Inquiry Into Procurement of Federally Funded Infrastructure

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today.

Civil Contractors Federation is the peak national representative body for the Australian civil construction industry. Our 2000 member companies are responsible for constructing Australia's roads, rail, ports, bridges, tunnels, and essential services including telecommunications, electricity, gas, sewerage to residential and commercial Australia.

Our members operate across all parts of the civil sector, and throughout metropolitan, urban, regional, rural and remote areas. These include major multinational companies, tier 1, 2, 3, 4, SMEs and one person ABN holders who collectively employ over 100,000 direct workers in the civil construction industry.

We therefore we have a strong interest in ensuring *all businesses* have fair and reasonable opportunities to participate in Government infrastructure projects.

Our key policy pillars include:

- An adequate level of infrastructure investment.
- A more Efficient, Equitable and Competitive Procurement program.
- Enhancing Skills Development and Training.

In addition to advocacy activities, CCF also own and runs a Registered Training Organisation known as CivilTrain delivering short courses and civil apprenticeships in all States and Territories of Australia.

CCF is also a registered industrial organization of employers and has a strong interest in enhancing Australia's industrial relation system.

CCF also owns and runs an industry WH&S and Business Efficiency accreditation program known as System Certified Contractor whose overall purpose is to assist civil construction companies to

meet their WH&S obligations, compliance with other laws of the land, and to complete their construction projects to the highest possible standard.

In practical terms, CCF supports a more sustainable sector in terms of the number of businesses it supports and the sum of the people it employs.

The CCF submission contains ten recommendations for the Committee's consideration. These include:

- improving the current procurement frameworks and policies to deliver projects to market in a more streamlined and timely manner.
- using collaborative contracts to appropriately distribute and manage risk.
- encouraging more bids from tier 2 & 3 head contractors through for example project disaggregation,
- ensuring there are appropriately qualified staff within government procurement agencies to manage the tender process, and
- reinstating civil occupations on the National Skills Needs List.

This inquiry is very timely and welcomed by the CCF.

With record spending by all levels of government, and the private sector, our procurement policies need to be fit for purpose and geared towards helping Australia rebuild from the economic effects of COVID-19.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a few opening remarks and I look forward to your questions.

Christopher Melham
Chief Executive Officer
Civil Contractors Federation National

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