

“Engineers, who needs ‘em” says Rudd

The industry association representing Australia’s engineering firms, Consult Australia branded today’s 457 visa amendments as Prime Minister Rudd’s first failure for business.

Consult Australia’s CEO, Megan Motto said that the reforms are a kick in the teeth for the industry and have already put Mr Rudd on the wrong foot with the business community.

“As far as Consult Australia is concerned, the sentiments Mr Rudd expressed regarding effective consultation with business will remain pure rhetoric until action is taken to suggest otherwise,” said Ms Motto.

“We were promised an open ear by Prime Minister Rudd. This was his opportunity to put his money where his mouth is and he failed to do so. He in fact made things worse for business – making employers of engineers’ enemy number one.

“We have shown both sides of government hard evidence that our industry employs 457 workers only to offset local skills shortages and not in order to bypass domestic professionals.”

The Association’s annual skills survey shows that 59 per cent of Australia’s consulting engineering firms recruited between just one and 4 per cent of new staff from overseas during the 2012 calendar year.

18 per cent of the industry did not recruit any skilled migrants over this period.

This is a marked change from previous years when the same survey quantified that up to 20 per cent of Australia’s biggest consulting engineering firms were bringing in between 16 and 30 per cent of new staff from overseas.

“These fluctuations prove that the industry directly responds to the market and only brings in foreign workers when absolutely necessary,” said Ms Motto.

“For an industry that uses the program effectively, the reforms will add an unnecessary burden; result in infrastructure project delays as firms struggle to procure skills, and will disrupt the flow of work for Australian engineers.

“To win back the confidence of business, the Government must pull this bill until a proper consultation process has taken place.”

Ends

27 June 2013

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact Consult Australia PR & Policy Coordinator, Gillian O’Young on 0423 223 620 or via email at gillian@consultaaustralia.com.au.

MEDIA RELEASE



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

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.