

THE ENGINEERING SKILLS SHORTAGE – NOT OUR PROBLEM!

Consult Australia has responded to today's release of a Senate Committee's report by urging the Government to take responsibility for their role in easing critical shortages of engineers.

These calls have been made in response to the release of the Senate Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee's report into the shortage of engineering and related employment skills.

Consult Australia Chief Executive Officer, Megan Motto has expressed her disappointment at the lack of ambition and practical action recommended by the Committee that is so urgently required.

"If the Government was to improve its own procurement practices and pursue policies and strategies supporting more collaborative contracting, the effects on the industry's ability to develop would be profound," said Ms Motto.

"It is apparent that there is a disconnect between the role government sees itself playing as policy maker, versus procurer of engineering services. The impact of procurement policy and implementation, including the continual shift of risk to the private sector, not only has a detrimental impact on the development of the industry but simply doesn't represent good value for money.

"If they were to restructure the public procurement process and re-think training delivery, the burden of the shortage on our industry would be eased and we would be better positioned to deliver the infrastructure our nation needs," said Ms Motto.

Ms Motto said that it is clear the Committee has taken a very cautious approach to the issue.

"The Committee's acknowledgement of the need to promote science, technology, engineering and maths and its recommendation that the Government consider creating senior technical engineering roles in the Australian Public Service are welcome but obvious recommendations," said Ms Motto.

The need for a national registration scheme for engineers was also acknowledged with a recommendation to advance the issue through COAG over the next decade.

"But these measures are not enough to ease the chronic skills shortage that is crippling this nation," said Ms Motto.

"Action now would mean that we may be able to avoid delays in new infrastructure as well as critical maintenance and repair."

Consult Australia's submission outlined the reasons for a reduced pool of future engineers, the privatisation of public services, the transfer of the training responsibility to the private sector and the inefficient use of the skilled workforce as some of the key causes of the shortage.

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.

ABOUT CONSULT AUSTRALIA

Consult Australia is the association for professional services firms within the built and natural environment; influencing policy, creating value and promoting excellence.

As an association, Consult Australia's primary focus is on improving the commercial environment for its members and raising standards across the industry.

MEDIA RELEASE



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Consult Australia's member firms services include, but are not limited to: design; architecture; technology; engineering; planning; landscape architecture; surveying; cost consulting (quantity surveyors); project management; and management solutions. The Association represent some of the industry's biggest players in this space with its member firms collectively employing more than 61,000 staff.