

## **‘WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY’**

### **Industry calls for government to lead by example through Model Client Policy.**

NATIONAL – The association for consulting firms in the built environment has released a new policy calling for government to lead by example to save taxpayer’s dollars and capitalise on the building boom across major cities.

The ‘Model Client Policy’ by Consult Australia is a series of principles to ensure governments behave ethically and fairly in their dealings their suppliers. It deliberately emulates existing model litigant policies in place across federal and local government, excluding Western Australia and South Australia, to demonstrate such a policy can be introduced.

Megan Motto, Chief Executive of Consult Australia, said: “We hear a lot about industry muscle, but government has muscle too, through its size, stability and tremendous purchasing power. This is particularly true at the moment, as many governments are investing heavily in infrastructure. Yet with great power comes great responsibility, and governments need to lead by example.”

Fourteen principles documented in the policy cover contracts, fairness and risk allocation; working relationships and communication; and payment on time. “It is more important than ever that government and industry work collaboratively together. If it not, it can have a devastating impact, particularly on small firms, leading to cashflow issues or simply some of our best and brightest have little choice but to walk away from work they could be doing to make our cities better,” Motto said.

The Model Client Policy builds on Consult Australia’s 2015 report ‘The Economic Benefits of Better Procurement’ [available [here](#)] which highlighted taxpayers could save 5.4% on the cost of projects if government and industry worked better together.

Motto added: “Whilst we do not wish to give such feedback, it is important governments are aware of what is taking place. At the moment there is a wall of silence: industry cannot talk to government through fear of being out of favour for future work. This is not good for our industry, for the taxpayer, or the cities, spaces and infrastructure they design.”

“If governments adopt the model client policy, then ultimately it will be the taxpayer who benefits through the quantity and quality of responses to tenders,” said Motto.

You can download the Model Client Policy [here](#).

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## **NOTES TO EDITOR**

### **1. About the Model Client Policy**

Consult Australia has launched its Model Client Policy which calls on all political parties to ensure that the governments they lead, or support, will behave ethically, fairly, and honestly in their dealings with the private sector. That is, for them to adopt a Model Client Policy, in line with governments' Model Litigant Policy.

A 'Model Client' works collaboratively with industry to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes and does not use their market power to the disadvantage of local businesses and their employees.

To be a 'Model Client' a government should:

- Operate in good faith and act ethically, fairly, and honestly in all dealings;
- Never use status, power or authority to gain unfair benefit or advantage;
- Undertake appropriate risk assessment, management, and allocation, which allows for innovation and collaboration;
- Avoid undermining the stability of the professional indemnity insurance market, through inappropriate risk allocation;
- Adopt fairness in contracting through proportionate liability and limits on liability;
- Avoid use of non-standard contracts, and variations to standard contracts without clear reasoning;
- Be clear, consistent, transparent, and focused on best for project outcomes in procurement and delivery methodology;
- Engage early and maintain open and constructive communication between all parties, dealing with them equally;
- Foster productive and healthy working relationships throughout the supply chain, recognising the roles of each party;
- Plan and prioritise projects, avoid making assumptions about industry capacity or capability;
- Keep costs of tendering and documentation requirements to a minimum;
- Provide clear, well structured, accurate briefs, and allow reasonable review and response times;
- Settle invoice payments and payment claims on time;
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, through the recognition of procurement skills and training.

The full report is available [here](#).

## **2. About Consult Australia**

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting firms operating in the built and natural environment sectors. These services include design, engineering, architecture, technology, survey, legal and management solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private and public sector including local, state and federal governments. We represent an industry comprising some 48, 900 firms across Australia, ranging from sole practitioners through to some of Australia's top 500 firms with combined revenue exceeding \$40 billion a year.

## **3. About Megan Motto**

Megan Motto is the Chief Executive Officer of Consult Australia; Member of the Government's new Cities Reference Group; a Director of Standards Australia; Councillor of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI); Treasurer of the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC) and sits on the NSW State Advisory Council for the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA).

## **4. For interview**

For more information and to arrange an interview Contact Kevin Keith on +61 420 90 12 76 or email [kevin@consultaustalia.com.au](mailto:kevin@consultaustalia.com.au)