

## **Consult Australia calls for skills rethink ahead of Jobs and Skills Summit**

Australia needs to think smarter about skills at the upcoming Jobs and Skills Summit to address the current crisis, according to Consult Australia which represents an industry that directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering and technical services and many more in advisory and business support.

The acute shortage of around 52,100 engineers, scientists and architects required to deliver Australia's burgeoning pipeline of public infrastructure projects is threatening economic growth and must be urgently addressed. The skills need is higher when you add other sectors, such as private sector building projects.

Consult Australia outlined its concerns and proposed solutions in its recent *Thinking Smarter About Skills* report, which interim CEO Kristy Eulenstein discussed at the Infrastructure Roundtable hosted by the federal government in the lead up to the Summit.

"We can't keep doing the same thing and expecting different results. We need to start thinking smarter about skills to address the current shortage, which has been years in the making. That means strengthening STEM education, increasing skilled immigration and prioritising over-due procurement reform," Ms Eulenstein commented.

Consult Australia's contribution to the Roundtable supported role-modelling a collaborative education strategy that prioritises STEM, with focus on the participation of women. Bridging the gap of skills shortages would also mean employing tertiary educated engineers as well as paraprofessionals.

"The government's Jobs and Skills Summit is a step in the right direction. We must use it to unshackle our industry from the capacity constraints caused by a lack of engineers, designers, and related professionals," continues Ms Eulenstein, "It is these consultants and advisers who turn big ideas into constructable reality – and drive productivity growth. Yet they face massive headwinds, from recruitment to accessing professional indemnity insurance."

Consult Australia will continue its solutions focus, making recommendations to help remove current roadblocks experienced in the engineering, design and advisory sector as it continues to engage government, educators, and industry in a collaborative approach.

**ENDS**

# MEDIA STATEMENT

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### NOTES TO EDITOR

#### 1. About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering, an industry comprised of over 58,600 businesses across Australia. This includes some of Australia's top 500 companies and many small businesses (97%). Our members provide solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private sector and across all tiers of government. Our industry directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering and technical services and many more in advisory and business support. It is also a job creator for the Australian economy, the services we provide unlock many more jobs across the construction industry and the broader community.

Consult Australia is a member of of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC). Consult Australia is proud to convene Consult Australia's Champions of Change leadership group for gender diversity and inclusion, a member of the Champions of Change Coalition.

#### 2. About Kristy Eulenstein

Kristy Eulenstein is the Acting Chief Executive of Consult Australia and Head of Policy and Government Relations, responsible for leading Consult Australia's advocacy and government relations agenda on behalf of members. Kristy is involved in various government forums representing the Consult Australia membership and leads a highly skilled policy and government relations team.

Kristy is a government relations specialist, having over 15 years' experience in the public service. Kristy has worked across a range of complex policy areas including interactive gambling, broadcasting codes and investigations, and online content. She has an Honours Degree in Law as well as a Degree in Science.

#### 3. For interview

For more information and to arrange an interview, please contact Andrew Butler directly on +61 423 296 903 or email [abutler@wilkinsonbutler.com](mailto:abutler@wilkinsonbutler.com).