

6 May 2016

Infrastructure will grow the economy, not tax increases

Consult Australia has welcomed aspects of Opposition Leader Bill Shorten's Budget-In-Reply speech and the Opposition's commitment to infrastructure and nation building projects, however the opportunity to provide business with tax relief has been missed.

"While there were a number of positive commitments were made in Mr Shorten's Budget Reply speech that recognises the importance of good public infrastructure, the opportunity to provide business with certainty and broader tax relief has been missed." said Megan Motto, Consult Australia's Chief Executive Officer.

"Any tax relief for business is welcome and we are pleased that Opposition Leader has committed to a reduced company tax rate for businesses with turnover under \$2 million, yet we believe that it is a missed opportunity for bipartisan support for broader company tax relief."

"While the overall the signs for the Australian economy are still shaky business is looking for confidence to ensure that they remain competitive in the global market. Increasing taxes doesn't solve the expenditure problem that this country faces" Ms Motto said.

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten did however highlight the important role infrastructure plays in enhancing the economy.

"The decision to boost Infrastructure Australia with a new \$10 billion funding facility and to seek investment from the private sector is a positive move."

"We believe that Infrastructure Australia is a vital part of the decision making framework around infrastructure projects, and it is critical that it is positioned to make a positive contribution to infrastructure decision making and the related public policy debate."

"The Opposition's commitment to invest in infrastructure is acknowledgement of the vital role that infrastructure plays in boosting productivity, but it ignores the fact that increasing our competitiveness through reducing the overall tax burden will also drive further private sector investment in infrastructure, and therefore enhance that productivity boost over the longer term."

Ms Motto said, "These announcements address a range of policy issues that we have advocated for over a number of years."

"We look forward to the Opposition substantiating the commitments made in Mr Shorten's speech over the coming weeks and submit that the best way to increase productivity and boost the economy is by reducing the long term tax burden whilst simultaneously investing in vital infrastructure projects"

Ends

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact Consult Australia's CEO, Megan Motto on 0411 104 458 or via email at megan@consultaustalia.com.au.

MEDIA RELEASE



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

About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the industry association that represents consulting firms operating in the built and natural environment sectors.

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.

Our member firms include: AECOM, GHD, Jacobs, Calibre Consulting, Golder Associates, Kellogg Brown & Root, Opus International Consultants, Aurecon, Rider Levett Bucknall, WSP/PB and WorleyParsons.