

MEDIA STATEMENT

FOR RELEASE 3 AUGUST 2022



Engineering and design skills must be high on agenda at Jobs and Skills Summit

Strengthening STEM education, increasing skilled immigration and prioritising over-due procurement reform is critical to addressing the skills crisis faced by the engineering, design and advisory industry represented by Consult Australia.

[*Thinking Smarter About Skills*](#), the new report by Consult Australia comes in anticipation of the Federal Government's Jobs and Skills Summit. Addressing the shortage of 52,100 engineers, scientists, and architects required to deliver Australia's burgeoning pipeline of public and private sector projects will need to be high on the Summit agenda.

Consult Australia, which represents companies that employ around 285,000 engineers, scientists and designers, identifies three roadblocks that require immediate action to alleviate the pressures caused by the current skills crisis. They include poor participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) education, red tape that prevents industry from accessing talent, and a worsening attrition rate.

Failure to address these factors will lead to further project delays and increased costs. Collectively these factors are threatening Australia's \$218 billion infrastructure pipeline as well as the significant built environment projects around the country. A pipeline that will deliver new roads to ease congestion, new rail to move people and goods safely and efficiently, critical water and sewerage upgrades to mitigate flooding and coastal erosion, and projects that are essential to reduce carbon emissions.

Nicola Grayson, Chief Executive of Consult Australia said, "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. 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."

In *Thinking Smarter About Skills* Consult Australia has made a series of recommendations that would help to remove these roadblocks. Consult Australia seeks to engage government, educators, and industry in a collaborative approach to adopting the solutions.

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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.

2. Thinking Smarter About Skills

Download the paper [here](#).

3. About Nicola Grayson

Nicola Grayson is the Chief Executive of Consult Australia. Nicola is responsible for implementing the organisation's strategy, building ongoing external relationships, and for leading Consult Australia's advocacy and government relations agenda on behalf of members.

Nicola is a member of and former chair of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Risk, Liability, and Quality Committee. In Australia she chairs the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council's Urban Resilience Task Group and sits on numerous government forums representing the Consult Australia membership. Nicola is the Convenor for Consult Australia's Champions of Change leadership group for gender diversity and inclusion, a member of the Champions of Change Coalition.

Nicola is a government relations specialist, and has represented industry associations in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Australia. Nicola has worked across a range of sectors including general insurance, consumer finance, alcohol, and education, in addition to consulting engineering. She has an Honours Degree in Law from the United Kingdom and is a member of the Australia Institute of Company Directors.

3. For interview

For more information and to arrange an interview, please contact Nicola Grayson directly on +61499 878 839 or email nicola@consultaustalia.com.au.