



Media Release

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Industry calls on governments: invest where the jobs are

Governments at all levels were urged today to invest in industries and sectors where new jobs could be created and sustained during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Almost 20 peak bodies and industry associations, representing thousands of businesses and tens of thousands of employees (*see list below*), met in Brisbane today at Queensland's first multi-industry COVID-19 response meeting - to share their experiences and plan for the future.

Hosted by the Committee for Brisbane, the meeting agreed to establish a single voice to plan for the COVID-19 response and recovery.

Committee for Brisbane CEO Barton Green said participants were unequivocal that the State and the country will recover from COVID-19 and attention must be given, now, to planning the longer-term recovery strategies, as well as dealing with the immediate impacts.

"The establishment of a single voice will enable Queensland industries to present governments with our shared views and ideas," Mr Green said.

"This is not to limit the work that many organisations and already doing, but there are many shared industry interests and concerns and where we can present governments with a collective view, we will."

Mr Green said the meeting called on governments to focus funding and support on labour-intensive industries that could quickly pick up new workers, such as in infrastructure and construction. If necessary, construction sites could be quarantined and treated as a special place.

"And governments need to fast track their decision-making to get as many people back into the workforce as quickly as possible – if a project is not quite shovel-ready, then let's get it shovel ready ASAP," Mr Green said.

The meeting proposed a wide range of other measures to support workers and businesses, including:

- Ensuring that the mental health of workers, managers and business owners was kept paramount and that funding and support was directed to this critical issue
- Funding for the retraining and upskilling of workers, managers and employers, including in digitisation strategies for the delivery of services, managing supply chains and providing entertainment
- Calling for maximum coordination across all levels of government, including stimulus packages, wage subsidies and tax relief (including payroll and land taxes), to ensure government support was equitable. This includes reduction of red tape, compliance costs and system complexity to support job creation
- Preparing now for the global recovery – to ensure Queensland industries are ready for the inevitable recovery



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Mr Green said a coalition of industry groups and peak bodies would be formed as quickly as possible to provide a single source of information to assist and advise governments.

“We will be seeking to invite more peak bodies and representative groups to this coalition so we can provide the most considered ideas from the broadest cross-section of the economy,” Mr Green said.

“Today’s meeting was just the starting point and we will work together to develop more specific ideas and plans to help our community work through, and recover, from the pandemic.”

Participating in the cross-industry discussion today were:

1. AI Group
2. Brisbane Marketing
3. Civil Contractors Federation
4. Committee for Brisbane
5. Committee for Economic Development of Australia
6. Council of Mayors (South East Queensland)
7. Engineers Australia
8. Infrastructure Association of Queensland
9. Master Electricians Australia
10. Property Leaders Brisbane
11. National Retail Association
12. Property Council of Australia
13. QMusic
14. Queensland Chief Entrepreneur
15. Queensland Council of Social Service
16. Queensland Tourism Industry Council
17. South East Queensland Indigenous Chamber of Commerce
18. The Real Estate Institute of Queensland

*For further information
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