

10<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Hon. Mick de Brenni  
Minister for Housing and Public Works  
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## Australian Institute of Architects

Dear Minister de Brenni,

Following on from your meeting with the AIA on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, the Australian Institute of Architects and the Association of Consulting Architects would like to raise the issue of minimum fees for Architectural services to ensure quality outcomes.

During the March meeting you presented some very informed views on the Lacrosse fire and the judgement and in particular your thoughts on Building Surveyors and their inability to charge a minimum statutory fee for service. We agree that the community would feel much safer and benefit from this important consultant being remunerated adequately for a service that allows him/her to do their job properly without fear of favour. The potential solution to certification probably lies in resolving these two issues.

Following on from this discussion, the combined voices of the AIA and the ACA feel that the design professions have been under sustained competitive fee pressure since the ACCC banned the use of fee scales. As a consequence, contractors continue to lament and write reports about the falling levels of contract documentation standards, right at a time when the professions should be leading the way with BIM and setting the standard on how to design and document projects well.

Unfortunately, this is all just a 'pipe dream' for the industry until the fee issues and consultant procurement issues are addressed and we create a demand to see value in the high-quality design and documentation of our buildings. The Department of Housing and Public Works could lead this process by setting appropriate fee schedules and demanding excellence in service so that the rest of the government and industry could follow. Examples of this leadership can be seen in interstate government agencies, with positive results for all involved.

This takes political leadership and vision, but in our view is the only real way to make significant changes for the betterment of standards and ensuring positive community outcomes for end users of our built environment.

The AIA and ACA would be delighted to work with your department further on this complex issue to see what can be done for the future of the construction industry and quality of our built and urban environment.

Yours Sincerely,

**Paul Trotter**  
*Queensland Chapter President*  
*Australian Institute of Architects*

**Robert Wesener**  
*Queensland/NT Branch President*  
*Association of Consulting Architects*