



the voice of the industry

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 February 2012

Risk to Economy too High to Abolish ABCC

The risk to the Australian economy of a return to the industrial lawlessness of decades past, is too great to abolish the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC), said the Housing Industry Association (HIA), the voice of Australia's residential building industry.

"If the *Building and Construction Industry Improvement Amendment (Transition to Fair Work) 2011* Bill passes through the House of Representatives next week, it will be a blow to the nation's productivity," said HIA Managing Director, Shane Goodwin.

"We are calling on Members of Parliament to scrutinise this Bill and consider their responsibilities very carefully before they contemplate passing it."

"It is becoming increasingly clear that Australia faces challenges with our labour force. The high Australian dollar is pushing jobs overseas and productivity has stagnated. Increasing flexibility and productivity should be the primary focus of industrial relations policy."

"The abolition of the ABCC risks turning the clock back on industrial relations by decades."

"Construction costs are an input into every other industry, and Australia cannot afford to go back to the bad old days of the economy being held to ransom by unlawful industrial action."

"The Cole Royal Commission shone a light on union militancy in the building industry and recommended a powerful specialist regulator. Through sustained efforts over many years, the ABCC has gone a long way to bringing the industry under proper lawful control."

"So it will be more than disappointing if the findings of Commissioner Cole, and the progress made by the ABCC, are effectively disregarded."

"The Australian building industry needs a strong cop on the beat, and retiring the one we have with no viable alternative in place is a risk the Australian economy can't afford."

For further information please contact:

Greg Weller, National Director, Communications on 0438 846 752

Authorised by HIA Managing Director, Shane Goodwin

MEDIA RELEASE