

# Media Alert

18 March 2015



**MASTER BUILDERS**  
A U S T R A L I A

## Building Industry Backs Sensible Reforms To 457 Visa System

The Government's proposed reforms of the 457 visa system will support a more productive building and construction industry and more jobs for young Australians.

"Master Builders welcomes the Government's positive approach in responding to the *Independent Review of the Integrity of the 457 Subclass Program*, particularly in proposed reforms to strengthen and protect the integrity of the 457 visa program," Wilhelm Harnisch CEO of Master Builders Australia said.

"The recommendations put forward by the Assistant Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Michaelia Cash, show that the Government has listened to the building industry's call for greater flexibility in the system while strengthening its integrity," he said.

"Minister Cash's response will cut red tape for builders who do the right thing while ensuring those who don't, facing tougher sanctions," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"Contrary to union claims, the building industry is committed to providing jobs for Australians first. The skills of foreign workers are called on to meet skills deficits on projects when local workers are not available," he said.

"Minister Cash's proposed training fund will reduce future reliance on overseas workers by supporting building industry employers to train more young Australians and upskill existing workers," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"Master Builders looks forward to working closely with the Government to ensure the industry is an important driver of the training delivery model under the new training fund to ensure positive outcomes are achieved and more job ready young people can readily embark on rewarding careers in building and construction," he said.

"The Minister's proposal that the fund should support builders to train more young people in regional and Indigenous communities will help fight youth unemployment and support the Government's efforts to close the gap for Indigenous Australians," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

"Master Builders also welcomes the Government's recommended move to more flexible labour agreements. Reducing the timeframe from 2 years to 3 months through the setting of service agreement by the Department is supported as is the more flexible approach in English language testing. The proposed averaging approach is a solid first step in addressing the industry's concerns," he said.

"Minister Cash's 457 visa reforms will assist the building industry to meet its cyclical skills shortages while providing Australian young people with more rewarding career opportunities in a key growth industry," Wilhelm Harnisch said.

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