



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## **Guide to Best Practice for Safer Construction launched**

Federal Employment and Workplace Relations Minister Joe Hockey will today (Wednesday 12 September 2007) launch the *Guide to Best Practice for Safer Construction*, developed by the Australian building and construction industry, to help combat the unacceptably high death and injury rates of workers on Australian building sites.

On average, one worker a week dies on a construction site in Australia and many more are seriously injured.

Chairman of Engineers Australia Taskforce on Construction Safety, Bill Wild, also Chief Operating Officer of Leighton Holdings, said all industry stakeholders consider this rate, which is nearly three times the all industry average, to be unacceptable.

"The *Guide to Best Practice for Safer Construction* has been developed following significant industry input and collaboration, and a detailed review of practical Australian and international best practice initiatives," Mr Wild said.

"It suggests a framework aimed at improving safety performance on construction projects and covers all stages of a project: planning, design, construction and post-construction," he said.

"The Guide is designed to integrate occupational health and safety (OHS) into strategic and operational decision-making by owners, clients, designers and constructors in order to reduce workplace injuries within the construction industry."

The Guide outlines six 'best practice' principles to manage OHS within project processes. These principles aim to establish a foundation for the collaboration of stakeholders (client, designer and constructor) who can all impact on OHS performance.

"The construction industry has an obligation to ensure, so far as we reasonably can, the safety of workers, the public, suppliers, and other participants in the construction process," said Mr Wild.

"Creating a strong safety culture requires the involvement and commitment of all project stakeholders, and is essential to the improvement of safety in the construction industry. A major aim is to encourage project stakeholders – clients, designers and constructors – to work collaboratively and continuously throughout the project to achieve the highest possible standards of project safety management."



AUSTRALIAN PROCUREMENT AND CONSTRUCTION COUNCIL



CRC for *Construction Innovation*, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, L Block, QUT Gardens Point Campus, 2 George Street, BRISBANE QLD 4000

T: (07) 3138 9291 F: (07) 3138 9151 W: [www.construction-innovation.info](http://www.construction-innovation.info)

Dr Keith Hampson, CEO of the CRC for *Construction Innovation*, said The Guide would deliver improvement to Australian workers.

“The overarching objective of The Guide is to reduce the number of accidents and deaths on construction sites and to improve the ability of the industry as a whole to deliver safer construction projects and healthier employees,” Dr Hampson said.

“The Guide to Best Practice for Safer Construction is a key outcome of *Construction Innovation’s* drive to improve the Australian construction industry. It results from the unique ability of our CRC to make a real difference through bringing together the private, public and research sectors.”

The Safer Construction Project was initiated by Engineers Australia because it was considered that engineers had an obligation, as important participants in the industry, and with a role in client, designer and constructor organisations, to do something positive to improve safety in the industry.

The CRC for *Construction Innovation* is providing the industry research leadership in coordinating and funding this key project. Significant funding was also provided by the John Holland Group, the Australian Constructors Association, Bovis Lend Lease and Engineers Australia.

Additional industry supporters are the Property Council of Australia, The Royal Australian Institute of Architects, Association of Consulting Engineers Australia, Australian Procurement and Construction Council, Australian Institute of Building, Master Builders Australia and the Office of the Federal Safety Commissioner.

Mr Wild said industry involvement in this project was crucial.

“The three primary stakeholder groups of the construction industry – clients, designers and constructors – have formally worked together to find a solution, which is critical as the *Guide to Best Practice for Safer Construction* aims to integrate occupational health and safety into strategic and operational decision making at all stages of the project,” Mr Wild said.

The *Guide to Best Practice for Safer Construction* will be launched at Mural Hall, Parliament House Canberra, at 5pm on Wednesday 12 September 2007 by Federal Employment and Workplace Relations Minister Joe Hockey.

For more information go to [www.construction-innovation.info](http://www.construction-innovation.info).

## **ENDS**

### **For interviews contact:**

Bill Wild, Chairman, Engineers Australia Taskforce on Construction Safety and COO, Leighton Holdings  
Mobile: 0409 066 702 Email: [bill.wild@leighton.com.au](mailto:bill.wild@leighton.com.au)

Peter Verwer, Chief Executive, Property Council of Australia (please call before 3pm)  
Mobile: 0407 463 842 Email: [pverwer@nat.propertyoz.com.au](mailto:pverwer@nat.propertyoz.com.au)

Dr Keith Hampson, CEO, CRC for *Construction Innovation*  
Mobile: 0414 642 288 Email: [k.hampson@construction-innovation.info](mailto:k.hampson@construction-innovation.info)

### **Media contact:**

Mel Kettle – Mel Kettle Consulting  
Mobile: 0404 600 889 Email: [mel@melkettle.com.au](mailto:mel@melkettle.com.au)