

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



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INDEPENDENT REVIEW INTO VICTORIA'S CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

The Victorian Government is moving ahead swiftly on its plan to eradicate the rotten culture exposed in parts of the Victorian construction sector.

The Government is today releasing the scope of the independent Construction Sector Review to strengthen the powers of bodies which are engaged with construction companies and construction unions to respond to allegations of criminal or unlawful conduct.

The Review will be conducted independently by Greg Wilson, who has previously served as Secretary of the Department of Justice and Regulation, Secretary of the Department of Sustainability and Environment and most recently as the Acting Commissioner of the Victorian Public Sector Commissioner.

The Review will investigate and recommend ways to amend any gaps or limitations in the current powers of Victorian bodies or legislation to respond to allegations of criminal or other unlawful conduct in the Victorian construction sector, and their interaction with the powers of the Commonwealth.

People coming forward with critical information about conduct on worksites deserve to have complaint processes that meet their expectations and those of the community.

The Review will consider how government can establish clear processes and protections for whistleblowers and complainants with allegations of criminal or unlawful practices, coercion, bullying or intimidatory conduct.

Everyone deserves the right to a safe and respectful workplace. The Review will strengthen practices in workplace relations and health and safety by reporting on the current roles and responsibilities of those managing construction projects and any steps that need to be taken to strengthen these practices.

The Review will also investigate the Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority's ability to direct the removal of individuals engaging in criminal or unlawful practices.

As part of the terms of the Review is the requirement to provide an Interim Report to the Government by Thursday 29 August 2024 and a Final Report by 28 November 2024.

At the request of the Victorian Government, the National Executive of the Australian Labor Party has banned donations from the CFMEU's construction division and suspended the division from the Victorian Labor Party.

On Monday, the Government wrote to the Commonwealth Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations requesting the Commonwealth Government exercise its powers under the Fair Work Act 2009 to review – and if necessary, terminate – Union enterprise bargaining agreements on Victorian construction sites to prevent criminal activity.

Responding to this request, the Honourable Minister Tony Burke confirmed on Wednesday he had requested the Fair Work Ombudsman undertake a targeted review of all enterprise agreements made by the Victorian branch of the construction division of the CFMEU that apply to Victorian Big Build projects.

The Victorian Government has also written to the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police and the Commissioner of the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) referring allegations for investigation.

For further details on the Review go to vic.gov.au/formal-review-construction-companies-and-construction-unions

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Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

“I am disgusted by these allegations of criminal and unlawful behavior in our construction industry. That is why I am taking action to stamp out these activities for good.”

“We will tear this rotten culture out by its roots – making sure our construction industry meets the expectations of the Victorian people.”

“Unions are meant to keep people safe – we are making sure that people coming forward with critical information about conduct on worksites have the complaints processes and protections they deserve.”