

# Policy statement



the Australian council of  
built environment design professions

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## National Regulation of the Professionals working in Built Environment Design

*...it is imperative that Australian society has confidence in and is able to rely on the professional services of nationally registered design professionals...*

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is well advanced in moving toward establishing national registers for construction industry occupations, other than professional construction industry design consultants.

As the peak body representing professional design institutes and associations the BEDP supports this initiative and believes it is in the national interest that it be extended to establish national registers for the design professions.

The urban environments and rural landscapes of Australia are intrinsic to the Australian quality of life. The condition of the Australia's built environments influences the economic, social, and environmental health of the nation.

The Australian public is dependent on the many services provided by professions working in Built Environment Design. This includes the services provided directly and/or through other agencies by architects, engineers, landscape architects, and planners.

The professions working in Built Environment Design are presently being challenged by the need to engage in continuous adaptation to respond to the implications of climate change and population growth. These professions require a multitude of approaches and scales of engagement in order to present society with future design scenarios.

The importance of these professions as an agent for positive change has never been greater with the environmental and social challenges facing the planet, individual countries and local communities. As a foundation for the future, it is imperative that Australian society has confidence in and is able to rely on the professional services of nationally registered design professionals who are being called on to assume responsibility for the design and active stewardship of the urban landscape on behalf of society and future generations.

Presently in Australia there are many regulatory and quasi-regulatory regimes maintained by local, State and Territory governments that come into existence because of the absence of a comprehensive regulatory system for the professions working in Australian Built Environment Design.

The professions working in Australian Built Environment Design could achieve higher levels of productivity and efficiency if the layers of regulation within jurisdictions and differences between jurisdictions were rationalized, simplified and, in some cases, removed. This policy statement calls for a national approach that will ensure a reduction in administrative costs, greater productivity and efficiency and which will enable these design professions to be more competitive in world markets.

## Current Methods of Identifying and Registering Construction Industry Design Professionals

Currently the systems of identifying those qualified to provide these professional services range from statutory systems, administered by State and Territory governments agencies, to association maintained “self regulatory” registers.

In other words there is a plethora of registration systems that are confusing to consumers, costly to the professions and inefficient to administer. In terms of global markets these systems do not readily facilitate the identification of “Australian” design professionals.

## Possible Models for National Registers

An effective system of national registration to ensure protection of the public interest requires a system of statutory recognition. This can be achieved by model legislation being adopted in each jurisdiction, mutual recognition agreements or Federal legislation.

The establishment and maintenance of registers can be undertaken by government agencies, professional associations or private enterprise.

The requirements for recognition of qualification and experience for inclusion on registers varies from profession to profession, but existing systems would require little modification to facilitate the establishment of national registers.

### Proposal

The Australian Council of Built Environment Design Professions (BEDP) proposes that the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Business Regulation and Competition Working Group, in collaboration with relevant member and professional associations and BEDP, develop recommendations to COAG for a system of national registers for the following professions;

- > Architecture
- > Engineering
- > Landscape architecture
- > Planning
- > Quantity surveying
- > Lighting design

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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