

CASA



Safeguard submission into Import of Fabricated Structural Steel

13 April 2026

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Casa Engineering would like to thank the Productivity Commission for the opportunity to make this submission to the review of the fabrication of structural steel within Australia and the impact of imported fabricated steel.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Name	CASA Engineering (Brisbane) Pty Ltd
ACN	099 919 990
ABN	28 099 919 990

Office Locations

Townsville
Brisbane
Rockhampton
Papua New Guinea

Workshop Locations

Townsville
Brisbane
Ipswich
Rockhampton

Equipment Storage Facility

Brisbane
Lae

The Casa family have ties to North Queensland, migrating to Australia and establishing themselves in Mareeba over 60 years ago. The family established a successful agriculture business. This provided the grounding to allow Peter Casa, a qualified mechanical/structural engineer, to establish a structural steel fabrication company. CASA has grown to become a national Engineering and Construction company from its founding in Townsville in 1995.

As part of the innovated growth, Casa established specialised equipment such as welded Beam machine in the Townsville facility capable of making welded beams 2100 mm high x 600mm wide at cost of \$1.2 million

Currently, CASA operates Australia wide demonstrating market leadership in technically challenging projects across various remote locations.

Size of Business

Number of employees – 90 to 120

Annual production Volume – 5,000t to 8,000t

Products Manufactured

Fabrication of steel tanks – HS codes 7309 and 7310

Fabrication of structural steel – HS code 7308

Fabrication of steel pontoons – HS code 8907

Fabricated welded beams

EVIDENCE OF AN IMPORT SURGE

Market Observation

CASA has noted a reduction in tender enquires and awarded projects for portal structure warehousing, commencing 2018 to the point where zero opportunities exist in the current market. Quite often enquires come in and ask for a tender price so that they can calculate the risk and reward for the imported steel.

- Hitachi, Wacol facility expansion 2019 – Site located in the same street as our fabrication workshop however the project was imported. CASA engaged to correct fabrication errors.
- 5000 m² Warehouse, Bundamba 2021 – Site located in the same street as our new fabrication facility however CASA were not even approached to provide a price to supply. All structural steel imported.
- 5000 m² Warehouse, Redbank 2025 – Site located within 1km of our storage yard and a competitor's workshop, CASA were not even approached to provide a price to supply as all structural steel imported.
- 77,000 m² Warehouse, Redbank 2026 – Site located within 1km of our storage yard and a competitor's workshop, CASA were not even approached to provide a price to supply as all structural steel imported.
- Eva Copper Maintenance Facility – Site located in the North West Queensland minerals district. CASA committed extensive resources to prepare tender for design, fabricate and install, then fabricate and install after the Builder provided a structural design, then install only after the fabrication was awarded to an Australian company who imports 100% of there fabricated steel and has no capacity to install. This was despite numerous assurances the project would be awarded to an Australian fabricator as imported steel would not meet project requirements.
- McNab Constructions have established a dedicated import supply company for structural steel. Despite this they continue to tender works locally for budgeting and cost checking with no intention to award.
- 2000 m² Warehouse, Goodna 2026 – The photo below is typical of these warehouse projects. Sea containers of structural steel arrive on site, destuffed and returned to the port with no local fabrication input.



Skid off structural steel fabricated and painted removed from a sea container

CASA has noted a move of imported structural steel into industrial plants with recent projects awarded for structural steel in process plants and warehousing.

- CSR, Coopers Plains facility expansion 2026 – CASA approached to provide a budget price and expression of interest. However, the project was awarded to a company weeks later who import 100% of their fabricated steel without local fabricators, including CASA, given the opportunity to tender. Clearly the supply of the structural steel was always going to be imported, yet there was a requirement for local market engagement before the order could be placed.

CASA has noted a trend appearing where projects are being awarded to a local fabricator, however when we investigate further, these companies are merely a shop front for an overseas operation. The local content is treated as a box ticking exercise and not about maintaining work for local fabricators. The practice costs local fabricators through tendering for projects where there is no intention to award locally and undermines the intent of local content within project approval requirements.

Recently CASA's primary workload is from government projects where there is a true local content requirement due to mandatory inspections by government inspectorates. As part of the Cross River Rail project, CASA provided fabrication and erection packages for the Stations. Works included pedestrian overpass bridges, stairways, lift structures and platform canopies.



Impact on Operations

CASA was forced to reduce the size of our facilities to align with the reduced availability of work.

- Rockhampton facility – Closed – All equipment packed and stored on 40ft container, the site leased, all staff and employees terminated until workload improvements allow for recommencement of local operations.
- Townsville facility – Closed – All equipment packed and stored on 40ft container, the site leased, all staff and employees terminated until workload improvements allow for recommencement of local operations.
- Bundamba facility – Closed – All equipment packed and stored on 40ft container, the site leased, all staff and employees reduce and relocated to a smaller facility until workload improvements allow for recommencement of local operations.
- Loss of full-time positions due to closures in regional Queensland - 70
- Financial impacts. Turnover 2022-\$40million, 2023-\$25million, 2024-\$28million, 2025-\$22million.
- These impacts represent a significant overall impairment to CASA's position

PRODUCTIVITY IMPLICATIONS

CASA has suspended capital investment in our operations by cancelling of an order for a beamline and paint line. These two machines would significantly improve productivity, However, without access to warehouse and industrial markets, investment in a beamline and paint line cannot be justified.



STRUCTURAL IMPLICATIONS

CASA has noted that young workers are not looking at taking on apprenticeships as they see no future in the industry. CASA has halved the number of apprentices employed over the last few years.

CASA has limited, to no access to the warehouse market. The loss of industrial plants would have significant impacts as the loss of local structural steel would have a knock-on effect with pipework and mechanical work packages.

The decline in apprenticeships and skilled employment has broader public-interest implications, including reduced local employment, and long-term loss of technical skills.

LINK BETWEEN IMPORTS AND INJURY

The injury CASA has suffered is directly caused by the surge in imported fabricated structural steel. Domestic demand for warehouses and industrial plants has remained strong, and CASA's capability and pricing have not changed. The only material change in the market has been the substitution of local fabrication with imported steel. No other factors can explain the loss of tenders in a peak market.

PUBLIC INTEREST CONSIDERATIONS

Safeguard measures would help keep work in regional and local areas, protect local fabrication, and support apprentices coming through as an ongoing trade. Without some form of protection, there's a real risk that local fabrication will keep shrinking, with significant flow-on effects.

Australia's exposure to losing a technical trade is real. If structural steel manufacturing imports continue then just like steel supply industry, there is no value in investing in a steel fabrication workshop. This means no tradespersons or apprentices. This also means that any structural steel will need to come from overseas and therefore our project and subsequent economy is again exposed to shipping and external economies.

PROVISIONAL MEASURES – CRITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Any delay in safeguards will cause more damage that we won't be able to undo. Skilled staff are moving on, regional sites have been mothballed. A provisional tariff would at least hold things together while the inquiry runs its course.

If you have any questions regarding this submission, or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact.