

Submission to the Australian Government: Reducing Regulatory Barriers to Production, Investment and Innovation

To Whom It May Concern,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide this submission regarding the impact that current laws, regulations and administrative processes have on productivity, investment and innovation in Australia.

Australia has an opportunity to become one of the world's most competitive and prosperous economies. However, many businesses, investors and entrepreneurs are finding it increasingly difficult to expand, innovate and create employment due to the growing complexity of regulation and approval processes.

The purpose of this submission is not to argue for the removal of sensible protections. Strong standards relating to safety, environmental management, consumer protection and workplace rights are essential. Rather, this submission advocates for a regulatory framework that achieves these objectives while encouraging economic growth, investment and innovation.

Current Challenges

Across many industries, businesses face:

- Lengthy approval and permitting processes.
- Duplicated regulation across federal, state and local governments.
- Frequent legislative changes that create uncertainty.
- High compliance costs that disproportionately affect small businesses.
- Complex taxation and reporting requirements.
- Planning systems that delay construction and infrastructure projects.
- Uncertainty that discourages long-term investment.

Collectively, these factors increase costs, reduce productivity and make Australia less attractive compared with other investment destinations.

Impact on Business

When regulation becomes excessively complex, businesses often:

- Delay expansion plans.
- Reduce investment in new technologies.
- Employ fewer people.
- Spend more resources on compliance than innovation.
- Avoid entering new markets.
- Experience lower productivity growth.

Small and medium-sized businesses are particularly affected because they generally have fewer resources available to manage increasing administrative requirements, higher operating costs, barriers to hiring, reduced cash flow, mental health and wellbeing, reduced access to finance, lower resilience during economic downturns, slower adoption of technology and less time to grow the business.

Recommendations

1. Simplify Regulation

Undertake a comprehensive review of existing regulations with the objective of removing duplication and simplifying compliance wherever possible.

2. Improve Approval Timeframes

Introduce statutory timeframes for planning approvals, development applications and major project assessments while maintaining appropriate environmental and community safeguards.

3. Reduce Regulatory Duplication

Improve coordination between federal, state and local governments so businesses are not required to provide the same information multiple times to different agencies.

4. Increase Tax Stability

Provide greater certainty through long-term tax policy and minimise frequent legislative changes that create uncertainty for investors.

5. Support Small Business

Simplify reporting obligations, reduce unnecessary paperwork and expand government grants and services that save businesses time and administrative costs.

6. Encourage Innovation

Expand incentives for research, development, technology adoption and commercialisation while ensuring eligibility requirements remain straightforward and accessible.

7. Conduct Productivity Assessments

Require significant new regulations to include transparent assessments of their likely impact on productivity, investment, competition and innovation before implementation.

Expected Outcomes

A more efficient regulatory system would likely:

- Increase private investment.

- Encourage entrepreneurship.
- Improve business confidence, including small to medium businesses.
- Create additional employment opportunities.
- Improve housing and infrastructure delivery.
- Increase productivity.
- Strengthen Australia's international competitiveness.
- Support sustainable long-term economic growth.

Conclusion

Australia's future prosperity depends upon creating an environment where businesses can confidently invest, innovate and expand while maintaining appropriate protections for workers, consumers and the environment.

Good regulation protects the public interest. Excessively complex regulation, however, can unintentionally discourage investment, slow productivity and reduce economic opportunity.

By simplifying legislation, improving approval processes and providing greater policy certainty, governments can encourage businesses to create jobs, invest in new technologies, innovations and contribute more effectively to Australia's long-term prosperity.

I respectfully encourage the Government to continue reviewing existing legislation with the objective of achieving a better balance between necessary regulation and economic growth. A regulatory framework that is efficient, predictable and proportionate will better support Australian businesses, workers and communities for decades to come.

Thank you for considering this submission.