



**MASTER BUILDERS**  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

# Master Builders Association of the ACT

Review of Matters arising from  
the ACT Government Report:  
**'GETTING HOME SAFELY'.**

Synopsis of the Review.



## Why the MBA initiated the Gower review?

---

- The MBA is a key industry stakeholder specifically mentioned in the Briggs-McCabe Getting Home Safely report a number of times. The MBA was therefore keen to respond to each of the recommendations in the Briggs-McCabe report and to properly address the comments made on the role the MBA currently plays in the ACT building industry as it relates to training and safety issues.
- The MBA felt it was imperative that recommendations in the Briggs-McCabe report did not create additional administrative burdens that would adversely impact on members' viability and their ability to conduct their businesses by adding more complex compliance measures.
- The MBA wished to ensure we could work closely with the ACT Government and other stakeholders in improving all aspects of safety in the building and construction industry.
- The MBA believed it was critical to appoint a person of eminent standing in the community and with a extensive background in the industry itself, to independently review how the MBA could enhance its approach to addressing the issue of safety in the workplace among its members.

## Our working group:

---

- The Working Group was formed in December 2012 within two weeks of the release of the Briggs-McCabe Getting Home Safely report. Independently chaired by Major-General Steve Gower, AO, AO (Mil), the Working Group included an academic researcher, a social psychologist and five very experienced industry practitioners from the major sectors of the building and construction industry (list attached).
- Neither the President nor the Executive Director of MBA-ACT were members of the working group.
- The Working Group met at regular intervals from December 2012 through until the end of February this year to examine the Getting Home Safely report in detail as well as receiving reports and questioning senior management of MBA-ACT regarding internal activities and training-related information.
- Authorship of the report rested with Steve Gower with input from his Working Group colleagues.

## The key findings:

---

- The Briggs-McCabe report is a valuable contribution to addressing the problem of enhancing construction worksite safety.
- 24 Recommendations were supported noting some (Recommendations 6, 7, 8, 12, 16, 19 and 25) required more work and/or cooperation with and between various agencies and industry bodies
- 2 Recommendations were not supported (10 and 11)
- 1 Recommendation (#4) needed further research to support the outcome.
- 1 Recommendation (#27) failed to be given enough prominence
- MBA-ACT should strengthen its safety training programs and service to its members by engaging a dedicated Work Health and Safety specialist.
- MBA should promote and develop very specific 'culture change' training programs aimed at middle management, an idea identified in the Getting Home Safely report. as having the real potential to impact on worksite safety It should also establish a training course for worksite 'junior leaders' to develop their communication and leadership skills using 'the bonds of mateship' as the underlying theme.
- The imperative to identify quickly and/or reaffirm the group responsible to drive and implement the Briggs-McCabe recommendations.
- Recommendations in the Briggs-McCabe regarding the development of frameworks (Recommendations 10 and 11) relating to the management of safety were not tasks an industry association such as the MBA could undertake. This is due to the diversity and size of organizations involved in the industry, and because safety management is a fundamental corporate governance matter that rests with building companies and developers.
- Consider the introduction of random impairment testing on construction worksites through the increased Work Safe ACT inspectorate to build on government and community expectations regarding safety in the industry, and based on data that identifies drugs and alcohol as a safety issue in the industry.
- Undertake a research project through the University of Canberra to produce authoritative data relating to injury rates on ACT construction worksites and enable comparisons with other jurisdictions.
- Remove the unfair stereotyping that currently exists, as the vast majority of members of the building and construction industry are operators of great integrity with impeccable safety records
- That all elements of building and construction industry unite in the common cause to improve every aspect of work safety.
- Recognize that the cultural and other changes will occur over a period of time and that some initiatives will need time to achieve desired outcomes.

## MBA's next steps:

---

- Seek meetings with the ACT Government and Liberal Opposition to discuss the report's details and recommendations contained within it.
- Continue to participate and cooperate with the ACT Government on implementation of recommendations of the Briggs-McCabe *Getting Home Safely* report that are supported by the MBA.
- Define the role and undertake the recruitment of a dedicated resource for Work Health and Safety related activities that supports MBA members and the wider building and construction industry.
- Develop a 'Bonds of Mateship' junior leadership training program in conjunction with the current cultural program being delivered to middle management in the building and construction industry.
- Prepare and distribute regular communication updates (both print and electronic) for our membership on progress and/or implementation of recommendations of the Briggs-McCabe *Getting Home Safely* report..
- Include *Getting Home Safely* progress reports as a standing agenda item for MBA-ACT executive committee meetings.
- Provide MBA-ACT's Sector Council representative Work Safety Advisory Group with responsibility to monitor and oversee implementation of the Gower Review findings and *Getting Home Safely* report recommendations where we have an ability to act.

## Impacts for industry:

---

- Greater member and wider building and construction industry support through the employment of a specialised MBA-ACT Work Health and Safety resource.
- A *Getting Home Safely* Oversight Task Force able to monitor, coordinate and direct all initiatives that could have additional and overly-onerous compliance obligations placed on business.
- Ensuring that additional resources the ACT Government committed to Work Safe ACT are appropriate and that education remains a key objective in negating safety risks across the industry.
- Expanded options for cultural and leadership training aimed at all levels of industry that incorporates the critical importance of workplace safety.
- Additional costs associated with compliance objectives.
- Potential to eradicate significant on-site safety risks through implementation of a random alcohol and drug testing regime.

## Stakeholder participation:

---

- MBA-ACT recognizes and accepts its responsibilities to continue to be fully engaged in improving safety in the local building and construction industry.
- It seeks a commitment from all other stakeholders to work together to improve safety in the industry and at the same time ensure that the appropriate authorities are able to carry out their responsibilities independently.

## MBA-ACT Working Group

---

The following are the names of members of the MBA-ACT Working Group established to respond to the Briggs-McCabe Report – *Getting Home Safely* and to review MBA-ACT and MBA Group Training activities:

### Independent Members:

- Major-General Steve Gower – Chair
- Prof. Patrick Zou – University of Canberra
- Dr. Rob Long – Human Dimensions – Safety Culture
- Alan Seymour – Kynetic

### Executive Committee Members:

- Andrew Crompton – Chincivil
- Graciete Ferreira – Pacific Formwork
- Valdis Luks – GE Shaw & Associates
- Marc Roland – Elevated Constructions

[www.mba.org.au](http://www.mba.org.au)