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FOUR CORNERS REPORT MUST PROMPT CHANGE IN BUILDING SECTOR: BPEQ

Widespread shortcomings in the building sector – including building defects, cost cutting, substandard work and a lack of oversight and public protection – have been laid bare in Four Corners' report *Cracking Up*.

The report comes in the aftermath of evacuations at Mascot Towers and Opal Tower in Sydney after the buildings were found to be structurally unsound.

Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland (BPEQ) Chairman Dawson Wilkie said the recent media attention on building standards reinforced the need for engineers to be involved throughout the building project lifecycle and for other States and Territories to adopt registration for engineers.

“Like many Australians I was shocked by what happened at Mascot Towers and Opal Tower,” said Mr Wilkie.

“Apartment owners expect that their homes are designed and built to a certain standard and comply with relevant building codes; qualified and competent engineers are an integral part of the building process.

“The Four Corners report highlights the urgency of having professional standards and regulation of engineers.

“Fortunately, Queensland is uniquely placed to deal with these issues by having legislation in place that sets standards for engineers; requires them to be registered to practice; distinguishes actual engineers from the pretenders and provides an avenue for the public to make a complaint about a professional engineering service if something goes wrong.

“The *Professional Engineers Act* has existed since 1930 and can be the model used by other States and Territories to regulate engineers and protect the public.”

Mr Wilkie said the *Professional Engineers Act* reduced the chances of a Mascot Towers or Opal Tower episode happening in Queensland. If similar incidents were to happen in Queensland, BPEQ can investigate and prosecute individuals found responsible for flawed engineering services.

To obtain registration, engineers must first graduate with an accredited engineering degree, then develop competency through work experience and be assessed as eligible for registration.

Once registered, engineers are awarded the protected title *Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland* (RPEQ). There are currently over 14,000 RPEQs whose names and contact details are kept in a publicly searchable register available at www.bpeq.qld.gov.au.

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