



## Legal & Commercial

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### CLT, is it a precast alternative?



There are certainly some people that think so. ['Plyscraper' has been named a word of the year finalist](#) and is defined by the Macquarie Dictionary as "a skyscraper built using super-strong, engineered wood products which are as tough as steel or concrete".

CLT will soon have a presence in, SA, NSW & QLD, adding to the already complete Forte Apartments ([YouTube](#)) in Vic.

- [South Australia's first CLT building receives green light](#)
- [Australia to get first commercial timber office building at Barangaroo](#)
- [Australia's tallest 'plyscraper' proposed for Brisbane](#)

## National office vacancies likely to slow

The chief executive of the Property Council of Australia, Ken Morrison, said "Australian CBD markets are due to have only 462,000 square metres of space due to come online over the next three years". "This is just half the amount of new supply CBD markets have experienced over the last 18 months," Mr Morrison said. [Read more here.](#)



## Construction costs to rise further



Construction costs are tipped to continue to rise faster than inflation over the next four years as residential work continues to drive activity, Rider Levett Bucknall's Oceania Report shows. Despite slowing building approvals and new housing starts, the still-elevated levels of housing construction, plus other building, will ensure price growth, even in weaker markets such as Perth and Darwin. [Read more](#) in the AFR.

## New OH&S chemical classification system

Now all workplace hazardous chemicals in NSW, ACT, QLD, SA, TAS, NT and the Commonwealth must be classified and labelled according to the Globally Harmonised System for Classifying and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) under the Model Work Health and Safety (WHS) Regulations. [Read more here.](#)



## QLD set for project bank accounts



Project bank accounts will soon become a reality for every construction project over \$1 million in Queensland as the state prepares legislation which will better protect subcontractors from the effect of major corporate collapses. [Read more here.](#)

## QLD small business entrepreneur grants

The Queensland Government is making grants available to new (< 4 years) small businesses (< 20 employees) to enable them to access professional advice and support. Matched funding of up to \$5 000 (excluding GST) may be provided to eligible businesses to engage a consultant, advisor, or business coach to help establish or develop the

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## VIC 'cowboy developers' face jail time



Victorian developers who undertake building work without a permit could spend up to five years in jail and be liable for up to \$0.5 million in fines. Read more [here](#).

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## WA parliament passes government's proposed amendments to the Construction Contracts Act

The Bill was passed with most amendments, taking effect from 15 December 2016. Sections 7 and 20, relating to payment terms and the maximum time for payment, will take effect from 3 April 2017. Read [more](#).



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## Superior concrete tiny houses offer tiny homes



Modular, luxurious, tiny homes (56m<sup>2</sup>) equipped with 2 bedrooms, 1 full-size bathroom, wood textured porcelain tile flooring, granite counter-tops, two outdoor living areas, and high-end amenities, are gaining popularity in the U.S. Read more [here](#), or view their website [here](#).

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## Small business protected

Amendments to Australian Consumer Law will extend protection to small business against 'take it or leave it' standard form contracts. The protections will apply to new, renewed or amended standard form contracts entered into on or after 12 November 2016. Read more from Moray & Agnew [here](#).

## Non-disclosure agreements - unenforceable if too broad



NDAs are a commonly used tool for businesses who want to investigate commercial opportunities with other business partners – for instance, joint ventures, investments, procurement, supply, distribution and licensing arrangements, franchising, sub-contracting and sales and purchases of shares and business. They are worth the investment if done properly. Read more from Moray & Agnew [here](#).

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## NSW security of payment legislation - a user friendly guide

Subcontractors and contractors alike can submit payment claims upon a principal/owner or a head contractor under the Building and Construction Security of Payment Act 1999. The rationale for such issuing is to quicken and facilitate payment. Read more [here](#).



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