

Time to Cut the Red Tape for Capital Works

P&C Federation's 2017 Annual General Meeting (AGM) unanimously endorsed a motion to negotiate with the Department of Education to ensure that when P&C Associations provide funding for works in schools, the policies and procedures support P&C Associations.

P&C Federation Vice President Joel Matthews commented, "Supporting projects in schools is one of the most tangibly productive things P&C Associations do for school communities, but we repeatedly hear of P&C Associations facing road blocks."

"What we often hear is that P&C Associations face repeated unexplained delays and costs exceeding the P&C Associations original quoted prices."

Mr Matthews added, "It is frustrating that schools who secure grant funding with a condition requiring formal acquittal, or who have raised the funds, are made to wait for a substantial period of time for approvals from the Asset Management Unit (AMU). In some instances, P&C Associations have had to return the grant funding due to a delay in approval."

"Volunteer members within P&C Associations work very hard to raise funds for school facilities such as refurbishing the library or covering the outdoor area and instead of a seamless process they face bureaucratic inefficiencies that discourages them from taking up these projects."

"Getting snared in the red tape so frequently is not only disadvantaging our students but also wasting the efforts of those volunteers making an attempt to benefit the school community and our children."

P&C Federation believes the following revisions should be implemented for the Procedures for the Joint Funding of Works in Schools:

- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all parties (including the P&C) and costs (including what contingency costs may include and if GST is payable).
- Where a project reference group is established it must include a representative from the P&C Association.
- P&C Associations be included in all project correspondence and consulted with on issues arising that could result in additional costs to the P&C Association.
- P&C Associations be allowed to use contractors registered and approved by the AMU without having to wait for approvals to expedite the process. The list of the registered and approved contractors should be made available to P&C Associations.
- Include provisions to allow P&C Associations to source local contractors to support the community.

"Resourcing our public schools is the Government's responsibility and what we want is that Government's policies and procedures support P&C Associations keeping the red tape at bay," commented Mr Matthews.

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