

Builders face tough times

QUEENSLAND'S construction industry continues to face tough times with insolvency experts claiming more than 400 businesses are at risk of going broke.

SV Partners said more than 430 Queensland businesses in the industry were at high to severe risk of insolvency according to the firm's analysis of commercial data.

This represents a 10 per cent increase over the past year.

SV Partners executive director David Stimpson said smaller construction companies were set to suffer from a forecast downturn in residential construction and were unlikely to benefit from the influx of commercial projects such as Cross River Rail and Queen's Wharf.

Queensland's construction watchdog last year announced a crackdown on builders who are operating beyond their financial capacity.

Public Works and Housing Minister Mick De Brenni also has introduced new powers for the QBCC that will ensure builders face jail time or hefty fines for financial malfeasance, including not paying money earmarked for subsidies into special trust accounts. QBCC inspectors will be given powers to seize documents and property from building companies suspected of financial irregularity under the reforms.

Glen Norris



GET TO WORK: Trainee Bradley Haynes, Ipswich MP Jennifer Howard, Minister for Training Shannon Fentiman, Ipswich West MP Jim Madden and trainee Verity Pont inspect the next project house. Photo: David Nielsen

Trainees eye off project

Blank canvas for next generation

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A HOUSE in Sadliers Crossing is about to be restored by 54 of Ipswich's keenest young tradies, thanks to the success of the Building Futures project last year.

A house was purchased in Hill St North Ipswich last year through a joint venture between Apprenticeships Queensland (AQ) and TAFE. This gave dozens of school-based apprentices a hands-on experience on a work site.

The house was finished and then sold in a timely fashion, with proceeds going towards this new purchase to continue giving the next generation of tradies real-life experience.

The high-set three-bedroom home in Herbert St will be transformed to include a downstairs area and add three bedrooms and a rumpus room.

Shannon Fentiman launched the new venture which she said was getting attention from the right places.

"It's a great partnership between Apprenticeships Queensland, TAFE and our schools to get 14 school-based apprentices working on this house, plus another 40 construction students getting a qualification in construction," Ms Fentiman said.

Verity Pont, 19, from Willowbank, is keen to get stuck into the project and is an example of a new generation of young women joining the construction industry.

"I love seeing the end project."

"You can drive past in 10 years and feel good about all the hard work you've put into it," she said.

■ You can follow the progress of the house in the QT's Real Estate Guide with your paper every Saturday.

Pumppyard
BAR & BREWERY

ST PADDY'S FUN DAY

Saturday 17th March

DJ NEX from 7PM

88 Limestone St. Ipswich 07 3282 9076 www.4heartsbrewing.com