

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP

Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing
Minister for Creative Industries



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NEW POWERS TO BACK LOCAL JOBS AND INDUSTRY

The Allan Labor Government is making sure the benefits of government contracts and projects stay right here in Victoria – supporting local workers, local businesses and local manufacturers.

Today the Labor Government will introduce the *Local Jobs First Amendment Bill*, delivering new enforcement powers to make sure government contracts and projects benefit Victorian workers and businesses first.

The *Local Jobs First Act 2003* is Australia's first and longest-standing industry participation legislation – it ensures that Victorian Government projects create real opportunities for local contractors, apprentices, trainees and cadets.

This new Bill will give the Local Jobs First Commissioner new compliance and enforcement powers to ensure contractors are meeting their commitments to use local workers, products and services on government projects, including the ability to issue civil penalties and conduct site inspections.

It will also give the Government stronger levers to hold suppliers to account, linking payments to performance and making sure suppliers who fail to meet their commitments can be deprioritised for future work.

The Bill includes greater support for Aboriginal and regional and small to medium businesses, and stronger guidance for agencies to prioritise Australian Standards and prevent imported products being "locked in" by design specifications.

It also includes new powers for the Minister to mandate locally made uniforms and PPE on certain projects.

The reforms follow extensive consultation with unions, industry associations and other key stakeholders – with the aim of creating more good local jobs, strengthening regional opportunities, and giving Victorian small and medium-sized businesses a fair go.

The Bill balances a diverse range of stakeholder views and improves the clarity and operation of the Act, ensuring it is fit-for-purpose and continues to be Australia's flagship industry participation policy.

From December 2014 to June 2025, local content requirements have been set for 382 Strategic Projects, supporting more than 60,000 local jobs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Industry and Advanced Manufacturing Colin Brooks

"Victorian Government contracts and projects should benefit Victorian workers and businesses. This Bill puts our state and our people first. It makes sure more money spent in Victoria, stays in Victoria."

"We're closing the loopholes, backing the Commissioner with more power, and making sure government contracts deliver for Victorians, driving local jobs, businesses and the economy."