

BER Illawarra and South Coast

Recent media reports about the Nation Building schools program in NSW not delivering value for money unfortunately do not reflect or acknowledge the complexity, scale and successes of the program. Richard Crookes Constructions (RCC), the Managing Contractor (MC) for the Illawarra and South Coast, remains absolutely committed to the Federal Governments stimulus and the BER program.

After winning a competitive tender some 12 months ago RCC have commenced work on over 90% of its 240 projects (42, 000 pupils) and continue to deliver these projects with the utmost of transparency, integrity and value for money.

The Australian economy was facing a serious recession in the wake of the global financial crisis. Construction companies were faced with the prospect of making staff redundant to counteract the drop in demand. The Government's innovative strategy has not only staved off recession but also created high quality educational infrastructure. In the Illawarra and South Coast alone, 3242 jobs (as of March 31st 2010) have been created in the region to deliver the BER works (both part time and full time). The BER has created a situation whereby many builders engaged by RCC have also been able to maintain or increase staffing levels as a result of the BER. Some include:

- Edwards Constructions Batemans Bay (Sam Edwards 0406 992 544)
- Pearce and Percy Construction (Ron Pearce 0417 735 401)
- Bass Electrical Unanderra (Tony Zahra 0408 233 470).

Other key features of the program, including; local participation, apprenticeships, training and Aboriginal participation have all been successfully maintained throughout the region. There are numerous success stories in our region of school and communities that have benefited due to this program, that is; local jobs and high quality educational facilities. As the economy recovers this is easy to forget. Case studies are available on request.

RCC are overseeing the whole delivery program which includes but is not limited to; initial concept to fully functioning educational facilities at each school. These services include concept development, site investigation, environmental assessment, planning, design management, tendering, project and site management, contract administration, auditing, safety, quality, environmental management, site security, child protection, community liaison.

RCC is a family owned business operating in NSW for over 40 years. RCC prides itself on the highest level of honesty, integrity and transparency and will continue to display these principals throughout the BER and all other works undertaken. www.richardcrookes.com.au

Our fees under the program are transparent and available as a matter of public record. A breakdown of MC fees can be found on the BER website at the link:

<http://www.ber.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Commonly-Asked-Questions.pdf>

For more information please contact Caroline Chalmers, RCC Stakeholder Manager, 0432 548 754 or 02 9902 4766.