

IMC Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
Services Contracts Bill 2025

Institute of Management Consultants

**Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on
Public Consultancy and Services Contracts Bill 2025**

Contents

Key Points	2
Comments	2
Recommendations	2
About the IMC	3
AS ISO 20700:2017 – Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services ..	3
Code of Conduct and Ethics	5
Recommendations	6
Annexures	6

Acronyms abbreviations

CMC	Certified Management Consultant
Code	IMC Code of Conduct and Ethics
DTA	Digital Transformation Agency
IMC	Institute of Management Consultants
ICMCI	International Council of Management Consulting Institutes
ISO 20700	ISO 20700: 2017 & AS ISO 20700:2025 Guidelines for management consultancy services

The responses also refer to the following abbreviations:

Consulting Services Inquiry:

Finance and Administration References Committee Management and Assurance of Integrity by Consulting Services, June 2024

IMC Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
Services Contracts Bill 2025

Key Points

In response to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
In relation to the Services Contracts Bill 2025 (Public Consultancy and Services
Contracts Bill), the Institute of Management Consultants (IMC) provides the following
comments and recommendations for the Committee's consideration.

Comments

1. The rationale for engaging a consultant to deliver a public consultancy contract should consider the adoption of international best practices for delivery and the ethical and professional conduct standard to which the consultant is to be held accountable.
2. The Australian Standard (AS ISO 20700:2025), Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services, is internationally recognised and provides guidelines for effectively delivering management consultancy services and recommends the best practices for delivering ethical and value-driven consultancy services.
3. The IMC Code of Conduct and Ethics (Code) comprises 25 core IMC-member commitments that promote accountability, transparency, ethical behaviour, and public trust in management consultants. The Code's obligations comply with the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes' (ICMCI) Code of Conduct for Consultants.

Recommendations

- 1. The Australian Government and its entities adopt AS ISO 20700:2025 when procuring management consulting services.**
- 2. Consistent with AS ISO 20700:2025, management consultants - including those serving Australian Government entities – engage with clients to confirm the standards of ethical and professional conduct applicable to each assignment.**
- 3. Individual management consultants providing services to the Australian Government be bound by a Code of Conduct and Ethics that applies explicitly to the management consulting profession.**

IMC Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
Services Contracts Bill 2025

About the IMC

Established in 1969 as a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, IMC is the professional body representing management consultants in Australia.

IMC's core purpose is to:

"... promote excellence and integrity in the management consulting profession, to improve the knowledge and skill of management consultants with respect to their roles, duties, and responsibilities and to encourage and uphold the highest professional standards and ethics ..." *Constitution of IMC, clause 6.*

IMC is one of seven national institutes that co-founded ICMCI in 1987. ICMCI is the global body responsible for setting standards and certifying management consultants worldwide.

In 1989, ICMCI introduced a globally recognised Code of Conduct and approved the "CMC" designation as the international benchmark of professional management consultants. Certification is awarded based on adherence to a standardised body of knowledge and a competence framework.

ICMCI fully accredits IMC to certify consultants in Australia and uphold global standards in professional management consulting.

IMC is the only professional organisation recognised by ICMCI for representing and certifying management consultants in Australia.

AS ISO 20700:2017 – Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services

ISO 20700:2017, Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services, was developed collaboratively by ICMCI and the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) and released in 2017. This international standard recommends best practices for delivering effective, ethical, and value-driven consultancy services. It provides guidance across all principles and processes of consulting: policies, contracting, execution, and closure.

IMC participated in the Australian Standards Committee MB-001, Management Consultancy, which resolved to adopt the identical ISO 20700:2017 standard as AS ISO 20700:2025 in April 2025 for Australian management consultancy services delivered to clients. (The Guideline Standard is hereafter referred to as **AS ISO 20700.**)

IMC Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
Services Contracts Bill 2025

Section 4.4.3 of AS ISO 20700 highlights the importance of ethical standards:

“A code of conduct should be observed to guide the ethical and professional conduct of the management consultant service provider during the assignment.”

This includes considerations such as professional behaviour, sustainability, social responsibility, conflict of interest, and integrity. Consultants and clients are encouraged to jointly review and agree upon an applicable code of conduct—whether it is the client's, the consultant's, the IMC Code, or that of another professionally recognised body.

The agreed code of conduct should be documented in the consulting agreement.

In the Digital Transformation Agency's (DTA) submission to the Consulting Services Inquiry, the DTA proposed that:

“... the Committee could consider including ISO 20700:2017 in Commonwealth procurement guidance as an expected minimum standard for consultants tendering for Australian Government contracts. ... ISO 20700:2017 is an international standard recognised as the best-practice guide for engaging consultants. It aims to improve transparency and understanding between consultants and their clients, as well as to improve the quality, professionalism, ethical behaviour and interoperability of consulting services.”

DTA Submission to Consulting Services Inquiry, page 6

To support the practical application of the standard, ICMCI developed Self-Declaration Checklists to guide both consultants and clients through the essential elements of the policies and contracting, execution, and closure phases of consultancy engagements.

IMC offers professional development training in AS ISO 20700 and the ISO 20700 Self-Declaration Checklists, delivered by Australian ICMCI-accredited trainers.

Consultants who complete the training are IMC-certified and use the Self-Declaration Checklists when consulting with clients. They can declare their projects as AS ISO 20700-compliant, helping ensure best practices and consistent service delivery for their clients.

IMC Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
Services Contracts Bill 2025

Code of Conduct and Ethics

IMC maintains an internationally endorsed Code of Conduct and Ethics (**Code**) which complies with ICMCI standards. The Code outlines the responsibilities of consultants to their clients, the profession, and society, supporting the management consulting sector as a self-regulating profession. The Code is attached as **Annexure 1**.

IMC has recently reviewed and updated its Code as part of its commitment to advocating higher ethical and professional practices in management consulting. The 2025 revised Code reflects contemporary societal expectations, reinforces the profession's dedication to integrity and standards, and defines the requirements for an experienced management consultant in Australia.

The Code comprises 25 core member commitments that promote accountability, transparency, ethical behaviour, the consideration of public interest, and public trust in management consultants.

The revised Code was informed by global and Australian thought leadership, the APES 110 Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards, and member feedback. ICMCI has approved the Code.

Key features of the updated Code include:

- 25 member-commitments to clients, the management consulting profession, and society.
- Commitments focused on the public interest, reflecting key issues in the reports of the Consulting Services Inquiry and the Ethics and Professional Accountability Inquiry.

IMC believes the Code represents the ideal professional and ethical standard for management consultants in Australia.

IMC Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Public Consultancy and
Services Contracts Bill 2025

Recommendations

In response to and support of Recommendation 29, IMC provides the following five complementary and alternative recommendations.

1. The Australian Government and its entities adopt AS ISO 20700:2025 when procuring management consulting services.

The Guidelines for Management Consultancy Services (AS ISO 20700:2025) *“improve transparency and understanding between clients and (management consultants)”* and *“enables (management consultants) to provide better value for clients and reduce risk”*.

2. Consistent with AS ISO 20700:2025, management consultants - including those serving Australian Government entities – engage with clients to confirm the standards of ethical and professional conduct applicable to each assignment.

AS ISO 20700:2025 is internationally recognised and provides guidelines for effectively delivering management consultancy services, as well as recommendations for delivering ethical and value-driven outcomes.

3. Individual management consultants providing services to the Australian Government be bound by a Code of Conduct and Ethics that applies explicitly to the management consulting profession.

IMC’s Code is endorsed by its members and ICMCI. It is tailored to the unique professional and ethical standards required in management consulting applicable to Australia and recognised worldwide.

Annexures

Annexure 1 – IMC Code of Conduct and Ethics

Separately attached to the email
