

Organisation and industry data update

Quarter 4, 2015 – 2016

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Rounding – *Due to rounding the numbers in this report may not add up precisely to the totals provided.*



Welcome to the VBA's quarterly organisation and industry data update

Introduced in July 2015, the update provides information on key activities undertaken by the VBA to regulate and build confidence in the Victorian building and plumbing industries.

Data includes information from a wide range of activities performed by the VBA, such as the issuing of new licences and registrations, customer interactions, inspections, audits, inquiries and prosecutions.

Industry data reported includes the number of building permits and plumbing compliance certificates reported to the VBA, and the number and type of practitioners holding current licences or registrations issued by the VBA.

The VBA is committed to the Victorian Government's open data policy. A wide range of data is available on the Victorian Government's data portal www.data.vic.gov.au, and on our data page at www.vba.vic.gov.au.

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Licensing and Registration

Purpose

Administer the licensing and registration system for building practitioners and plumbing practitioners, by only licensing and registering competent persons to enter into and remain within the building and plumbing industries.

Key activities

- Deliver improved practitioner and consumer interactions
- Improve efficiency of assessors
- Prepare and implement process improvements
- Early engagement with plumbing apprentices and aspiring building practitioners regarding their registration obligations
- Effectively influence training courses that provide a pathway to registration/licence as a building or plumbing practitioner

Table 1: Volume of new applications for licence / registration / reinstatement lodged – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16
Building	1,024
Plumbing	434
Total	1,458

Table 2: Application for registration as a practitioner finalised – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16
Building	577
Plumbing	313
Total	890

Table 3: Volume of renewed licence / registration – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16
Building	7,639
Plumbing	4,620
Total	12,259

Table 4: Total licenced / registered practitioners – at quarter end

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Building	22,377	21,779
Plumbing	26,495	26,381
Total	48,872	48,160

Table 5: Total registered building practitioners by category – at quarter end

Registration category*	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15	Q4 2013-14	Q4 2012-13
Builder - Demolition - Low Rise	240	226	208	197
Builder - Demolition - Med Rise	65	64	60	63
Builder - Demolition - Unlimited	40	37	34	35
Demolition - Subtotal	345	327	302	295
Commercial Builder - Limited	3,012	2,844	2,462	2,307
Commercial Builder - Unlimited	2,131	2,100	2,078	2,199
Commercial Builder - Subtotal	5,143	4,944	4,540	4,506
Domestic Builder - Limited	2,660	2,573	2,145	2,040
Domestic Builder - Manager	1,082	1,092	1,137	1,127
Domestic Builder - Unlimited	11,305	11,027	11,116	11,149
Domestic Builder - Subtotal	15,047	14,692	14,398	14,316
Building Inspector - Limited	223	224	211	183
Building Inspector - Unlimited	434	421	422	404
Building Inspector - Subtotal	657	645	633	587
Building Surveyor - Limited	108	96	75	69
Building Surveyor - Unlimited	558	542	528	523
Building Surveyor - Subtotal	666	638	603	592
Draftsperson Building Design (Architectural)	2,083	2,032	2,032	2,015
Draftsperson Building Design (Interior)	186	174	160	163
Draftsperson Building Design (Services)	172	167	168	178
Draftsperson - Subtotal	2,441	2,373	2,360	2,356
Civil Engineer	1,529	1,449	1,403	1,326
Electrical Engineer	300	281	277	256
Fire Safety Engineer	175	145	143	134
Mechanical Engineer	455	432	423	403
Engineer - Subtotal	2,459	2,307	2,246	2,119
Quantity Surveyor	134	127	134	124
Quantity Surveyor – Subtotal	134	127	134	124
Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 1	32	30	30	34
Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 2	79	79	77	83
Temp. Structures - Subtotal	111	109	107	117
Total	27,003	26,162	25,323	25,012

*One person may be registered in more than one category of building practitioner.

Table 6: Total plumbing practitioners holding licence / registration by main class – at quarter end

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Registered plumbers		
Drainage	11,362	11,264
Fire protection	562	566
Gas fitting	11,737	11,692
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	11,272	11,176
Mechanical services	13,477	13,816
Roofing (storm water)	12,232	12,176
Sanitary	11,700	11,577
Water supply	11,236	11,143
Licensed plumbers		
Drainage	8,714	8,717
Fire protection	113	113
Gas fitting	8,461	8,339
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	9,447	9,356
Mechanical services	2,684	2,732
Roofing (storm water)	8,155	8,138
Sanitary	8,621	8,566
Water supply	9,413	9,326

Table 7: Total plumbing practitioners holding licence / registration by specialised class – at quarter end

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Registered plumbers		
Backflow prevention	576	498
Refrigerated air conditioning	846	836
Type A appliance conversion	154	135
Type A appliance servicing work	7,103	7,514
Type B gas fitting	318	313
Type B gas fitting advanced	42	38
Licensed plumbers		
Backflow prevention	1,433	1,321
Refrigerated air conditioning	1,148	1,114
Type A appliance conversion	575	538
Type A appliance servicing work	6,536	6,632
Type B gas fitting	360	354
Type B gas fitting advanced	138	141

Table 8: Plumbing Examinations pass rate – at quarter end

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Journey man - 1st attempt	37%	34%
Journey man - subsequent attempt	50%	53%

Enquiries and Dispute Resolution

Purpose

Provide quality customer service when responding to complaints and enquiries, Building Appeals Board (BAB) services and inspection services.

Key activities

- Deliver front line customer service
- Perform statutory decision-making functions
- Process owner-builder applications for approval by the BAB Registrar
- Manage building and plumbing complaints
- Provide accurate and impartial inspection services on behalf of the VBA
- Perform Municipal Building Surveyor functions on behalf of the VBA
- Provide BAB services
- Enhance divisional capability

Table 9: Volume of calls – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
VBA Queues	59,208	55,719
Customer Service Unit Queues	30,177	25,890

Table 10: Calls by performance (abandoned) – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
VBA Queues	5.6%	4.5%
CSU Queues	6.3%	4.3%

Table 11: Calls by service levels (calls answered in 20 seconds) – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
VBA All Queues	71.4%	77.0%
CSU Queues	67.0%	78.3%

Table 12: Volume of email, mail, in person – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Email	5,172	3,848
Mail	26,570	29,540
In person	3,289	4,517

Table 13: Volume of new complaints by type – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Total	951	700
Building	477	353
Plumbing	474	347

Table 14: Volume of Owner-Builder applications – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Applications received*	2,177	2,102
Certificate of Consent issued	2,155	1,739

*Represents number of applications received within a 90 day period but may include processing of applications received in the previous quarter.

Table 15: Volume of building modifications and appeals for the Building Appeals Board – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Appeal/Disputes/Other Proceedings applications*	276	34
Modifications**	46	295

* Includes matters that were scheduled but adjourned or withdrawn

** Matters determined, some applications will have more than one matter

Table 16: Terminations of Building Surveyor Applications – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Applications received	376	136
Applications closed	244	78

Compliance and Performance

Purpose

Undertake investigations and audits, oversee the collection of building permit levies, co-ordinate and support practitioner disciplinary proceedings and analyse industry information to identify risks and trends.

Key activities

- Investigation (Building & Plumbing)
- Audit (Building, Plumbing & Levy)
- Practitioner Intelligence and Levy
- Practitioner Discipline

Table 17: Levy collected – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Levy collected	\$10,709,571	\$9,443,723

Table 18: Building statistics – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Number of reporting building surveyors and lodging organisations	323	336
Number of building permits reported	30,119	26,206
Reported cost of building works	\$9,301,340	\$7,438,000

Table 19: Plumbing statistics – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Compliance certificates sold to practitioners	102,329	93,499
Compliance certificates lodged by practitioners	97,828	90,132
Revenue from compliance certificates sold	\$3,231,587	\$2,885,568

Table 20: Audit statistics – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Plumbing audits		
Plumbing audits completed	3,785	2,394
Plumbing audits as a percentage of lodged compliance certificates	3.8%	2.8%
Failure rate	12.2%	18.3%

Table 21: Investigations completed – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Plumbing Investigations		
Plumbing investigations completed	194	236
Building Investigations		
Building investigations completed	188	117

Table 22: Levy Audit – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Number of Field Audits Completed	9	13
Number of Desk Audits Completed	0	2
Number of Desk Reviews Completed	1	6
Total Audits and Review Completed	10	21
Levy Recovered from Normal Audits	\$63,947	\$45,290
Unusual Audit Findings	\$147,729	(\$93,900)
Net Levy Recovered After Unusual Audit Findings	\$211,676	(\$48,610)

Technical and Regulation

Purpose

Assist and guide government, practitioners and consumers through the provision of technical information.

Key activities

- Regulatory evaluation
- Regulatory policy and regulatory development
- Research
- Technical advice
- Administrative decisions

Table 23: Plumbing Phone Data – at month end

The Top 10 call categories for the period April – June 2016 make up 81% of the total inbound calls of 4,535 for which technical advice was provided.

	Q4 2015-16 Call volume	Q4 2015-16 % of total call volume*	As at Jun-16	As at May-16	As at Apr-16
Top 10 call categories sorted by Q4 total					
Drainage	782	17%	222	283	277
Gas fitting	721	16%	236	264	221
Roofing (Stormwater)	516	11%	170	209	137
Water Supply	382	8%	131	133	118
Compliance Certificates	354	8%	99	143	112
Sanitary	209	5%	62	71	76
Legislation	207	5%	101	50	56
Mechanical Services	182	4%	53	70	59
Modifications	162	4%	52	65	45
Complaint	141	3%	46	50	45

* Discrepancies due to rounding (+/- 1%)

Table 24: Building Phone Data – at month end

The Top 10 call categories for the period April – June 2016 make up 56% of the total inbound calls of 2,624 for which technical advice was provided.

	Q4 2015-16 Call volume	Q4 2015-16 % of total call volume*	As at Jun-16	As at May-16	As at Apr-16
Top 10 call categories sorted by Q2 total					
General technical advice	377	14%	114	113	150
Defective Building Work	276	11%	72	89	115
Building Permits	131	5%	37	47	47
Practitioner Registration	127	5%	50	41	36
Contractual	121	5%	42	36	43
Access and Egress	100	4%	29	32	39
Protection Work	95	4%	24	31	40
Health & Amenity	94	4%	34	29	31
Insurance	80	3%	24	30	26
Pool / Spa	70	3%	24	17	29

* Discrepancies due to rounding (+/- 1%)

Table 25: Temporary structures, modifications and accreditations – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Volume of temporary structure occupancy permits issued	12	7
Volume of plumbing modification applications	136	133
Plumbing modification applications approval rate	92%	97%
Volume of building product accreditation certificates issued	0	0

Table 26: Volume of security of payment – over quarter

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Applications lodged	80	68
Applications determined	46	38
Applications not determined or not yet determined	34	30
Claimed amounts	\$14,994,284	\$8,990,508
Adjudicated amounts	\$3,554,219	\$2,626,115

Office of the CEO

Purpose

Provide communication, governance and legal services to the VBA to enable it to effectively regulate Victoria's built environment and to manage the implementation of the VBA's business improvements.

Key activities

- Develop and maintain a strong VBA presence and stakeholder engagement
- Deliver strategic and major projects arising from statutory obligations
- Influence and inform best practice policy and regulation
- Drive a culture underpinned by integrity that encourages leadership, energy and enthusiasm
- Embed strong governance

Table 27: Inquiries and prosecutions

	Q4 2015-16 finalised	Q4 2014-15 finalised
Building		
Building practitioner disciplinary hearings held by BPB	25	33
Prosecutions completed	17	35
Plumbing		
Plumbing practitioner disciplinary hearings held	12	18
Prosecutions completed	4	19

Table 28: Website and mail reach

	Q4 2015-16	Q4 2014-15
Website visits	163,839	131,528
VBA mail distribution	166,500	109,740

Glossary

Accreditations	A certificate of building product accreditation is proof that a product meets the performance requirements of the Building Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) or the Building Code of Australia (BCA).
Building and construction sector	A defined secondary sector of the economy.
Building and plumbing industry	A part of the building and construction sector relating to building and plumbing practitioners.
Building Appeals Board (BAB)	An independent statutory body established under the <i>Building Act 1993</i> . The BAB is empowered to determine any matter relating to the <i>Building Regulations 2006</i> , the <i>Building Code of Australia 2006</i> and specified provisions of the <i>Building Act 1993</i> .
Building modification	A variation of the <i>Building Regulations 2006</i> . Where a practitioner believes they are unable to complete a job in compliance with the relevant regulations or codes and standards, they may apply for a modification.
Building permit	Written approval from a registered building surveyor that shows plans fit within building regulations.
Building practitioners	Includes building surveyors, building inspectors, draftspersons, engineers engaged in the building industry, commercial and domestic builders, demolishers, people who erect temporary structures and quantity surveyors.
Building Practitioners Board (BPB)	An independent statutory body established under the <i>Building Act 1993</i> . The BPB oversees the quality and standard of professional services in the Victorian building industry. In doing so, it administers a registration system and monitors the conduct and ability of registered building practitioners.
Building Surveyor	A building surveyor is a professional trained in understanding the building control process. Building surveyors are responsible for ensuring buildings are safe, accessible and energy efficient and therefore have an impact on the design, planning and functionality of buildings.
Built environment	The physical and human-made world.
Cancellations	[See Table 22] Refers to practitioners who have had their registration cancelled.
Certificate of consent	A certificate of consent under Division 3A of Part 3 of the Building Act.
Completed inquiries	[see Table 22] A BPB Inquiry is a hearing into a registered building practitioners' conduct and/or ability to practice. These inquiries are held for building practitioners who are currently registered or were registered at the time of an alleged offence or misconduct.
Compliance Certificate	A certificate issued by a licensed plumber, to the consumer who commissioned the work, to certify the work they do complies with the relevant plumbing standards, codes and regulations. [See Table 19] Sold means templates purchased from the VBA by licensed plumbers Lodged means provided to the VBA – plumbers must also lodge with the VBA details of any compliance certificate they issue.
Conduct reviews	A review into the conduct of a building practitioner. The BPB may decide to conduct an early conduct review, or conduct review

	rather than an Inquiry.
Failure rate (audits)	The percentage of works that are audited and are found to be non-compliant.
Freedom of Information	Requests made to the VBA to release information under the <i>Freedom of Information Act 1982</i> .
Inspection	An examination of building or plumbing works that is the subject of dispute.
Levy	Building permit levy. In order to fund the Building Control and Domestic Dispute Resolution System in Victoria, the <i>Building Act 1993</i> imposes a building permit levy. The levy amount is based on the cost of the building work and must be paid by the applicant to the relevant building surveyor before a building permit can be issued.
Occupancy permit	Issued by the building surveyor after final inspection of the building; it shows that the building is safe and suitable for occupation.
On-site conciliation technical inspections	Inspections conducted by the VBA to help resolve a domestic building dispute between parties that are willing to participate in the conciliations process. If Building Advice and Conciliation Victoria are assisting a consumer with a domestic building dispute, the VBA may be asked to conduct a technical inspection to help resolve the items in dispute.
Open Investigation	[see Table 21] Investigation being conducted by the VBA that has not concluded.
Owner-builder	Someone who carries out building on their own property. Owner-builders are not in the business of building.
Planning permit	A permit obtained from the relevant local council that relates to the zoning, use and development of land.
Plumbing modification	A variation of the <i>Plumbing Modifications 2008</i> . The modification process allows for one-off and site-specific variations to the technical requirements to provide acceptable solutions that achieve the necessary performance.
Plumbing practitioner	Includes fire protection, water supply, sanitary, roofing (stormwater), mechanical services, irrigation (non-agricultural), gas-fitting and drainage classes.
Practitioner	A building practitioner and plumbing practitioner.
Quantity Surveyor	A quantity surveyor is a trained professional who estimates and manages the cost of construction projects.
Registered builder	A building practitioner registered with the Building Practitioners Board to complete limited or unlimited work.
Registered or licensed plumber	A plumbing practitioner registered or licensed with the VBA to legally carry out any work within the defined classes.
Request for inspection under s.44	Inspections requested directly to the VBA by an owner or builder in dispute.
s.44	Section 44 of the <i>Building Act 1993</i> – Refusal of occupancy permit.
Security of payment	[see Table 24] Refers to the <i>Building and Construction Industry Security of Payment Act 2002</i> , which helps ensure that any person who carries out construction work or supplies related goods and services under a construction contract gets paid.
Suspensions	Refers to practitioners who are suspended from practising.

Temporary structure	Includes a booth, tent, marquee or other temporary enclosure, whether or not a part of the booth, tent, marquee or enclosure is permanent; or a seating structure whether enclosed or not, including a mobile seating structure.
VBA	Victorian Building Authority.