

Organisation and industry data update

Quarter 3, 2016 – 2017

Disclaimer – *Some of the information presented in this publication is based on data provided to the Victorian Building Authority. The Victorian Building Authority disclaims any liability (including for negligence) in respect of anything done or not done by any person in reliance upon anything included or omitted in this publication.*

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.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Welcome to the VBA’s quarterly organisation and industry data update | 3 |
| Licensing and Registration..... | 6 |
| Table 1: Volume of new applications for licence / registration / reinstatement lodged – over quarter | 6 |
| Table 2: Application for registration as a practitioner finalised – over quarter..... | 6 |
| Table 3: Volume of renewed licence / registration – over quarter | 6 |
| Table 4: Total licenced / registered practitioners – at quarter end..... | 7 |
| Table 5: Total registered building practitioners by category – at quarter end | 7 |
| Table 6: Total plumbing practitioners holding licence / registration by main class – at quarter end | 8 |
| Table 7: Total plumbing practitioners holding licence / registration by specialised class – at quarter end | 8 |
| Enquiries, Inspections and Complaints..... | 9 |
| Table 8: Volume of calls – over quarter..... | 9 |
| Table 9: Calls by performance (abandoned) – over quarter..... | 9 |
| Table 10: Calls by service levels (calls answered in 20 seconds) – over quarter..... | 9 |
| Table 11: Volume of email, mail, in person – over quarter | 9 |
| Table 12: Volume of new complaints by type – over quarter..... | 9 |
| Table 13: Volume of Owner-Builder applications – over quarter | 10 |
| Table 14: Volume of building modifications and appeals for the Building Appeals Board – over quarter | 10 |
| Table 15: Terminations of Building Surveyor Applications – over quarter | 10 |
| Table 16: Pro-Active Inspection Program | 10 |
| Compliance and Performance | 11 |
| Table 17: Levy collected – over quarter | 11 |
| Table 18: Building statistics – over quarter | 11 |
| Table 19: Plumbing statistics – over quarter | 11 |
| Table 20: Plumbing Audit statistics – over quarter..... | 11 |
| Table 21: Practitioner discipline (building) | 11 |
| Table 22: Investigations completed – over quarter..... | 12 |
| Table 23: Levy Audit – over quarter | 12 |
| Technical and Regulation | 13 |
| Table 24: Plumbing Phone Data – at month end..... | 13 |
| Table 25: Building Phone Data – at month end..... | 13 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 26: Temporary structures, modifications and accreditations – over quarter | 13 |
| Table 27: Volume of security of payment | 13 |
| Table 28: Building Audit – over quarter..... | 13 |
| Office of the CEO..... | 14 |
| Table 29: Inquiries and prosecutions..... | 14 |
| Table 30: Website and mail reach | 14 |
| Glossary..... | 15 |

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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Building | 486 | 590 |
| Plumbing | 365 | 508 |
| Total | 851 | 1,098 |

Note - plumbing excludes reinstatement applications (effectively a late renewal) and amendment applications (because the majority are upgrading between registration and licence due to insurance issues)

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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Building | 533 | 697 |
| Plumbing | 344 | 316 |
| Total | 877 | 1,013 |

Note - plumbing excludes reinstatement applications (effectively a late renewal) and amendment applications (because majority are upgrading between registration and licence due to insurance issues)

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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Building | 5,883 | 5,295 |
| Plumbing | 4,352 | 4,394 |
| Total | 10,235 | 9,689 |

Note - Building, the figure reported is a count of the number of registrations where the practitioner paid the annual fee and provided proof of insurance cover. This count does not currently include the number of applications for renewal of registration that have been finalised (5-year renewal was introduced from 1/9/17). Such applications are not due to start being finalised until May 2017.

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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Building | 22,698 | 22,254 |
| Plumbing | 26,891 | 26,467 |
| Total | 49,589 | 48,721 |

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

| Registration category* | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Builder - Demolition - Low Rise | 251 | 235 |
| Builder - Demolition - Med Rise | 63 | 63 |
| Builder - Demolition - Unlimited | 43 | 41 |
| Demolition - Subtotal | 357 | 339 |
| Commercial Builder - Limited | 3,120 | 2,985 |
| Commercial Builder - Unlimited | 2,179 | 2,143 |
| Commercial Builder - Subtotal | 5,299 | 5,128 |
| Domestic Builder - Limited | 2,737 | 2,651 |
| Domestic Builder - Manager | 1,079 | 1,078 |
| Domestic Builder - Unlimited | 11,426 | 11,258 |
| Domestic Builder - Subtotal | 15,242 | 14,987 |
| Building Inspector - Limited | 229 | 223 |
| Building Inspector - Unlimited | 434 | 432 |
| Building Inspector - Subtotal | 663 | 655 |
| Building Surveyor - Limited | 112 | 106 |
| Building Surveyor - Unlimited | 553 | 555 |
| Building Surveyor - Subtotal | 665 | 661 |
| Draftsperson Building Design (Architectural) | 2,085 | 2,078 |
| Draftsperson Building Design (Interior) | 189 | 189 |
| Draftsperson Building Design (Services) | 166 | 169 |
| Draftsperson - Subtotal | 2,440 | 2,436 |
| Civil Engineer | 1,560 | 1,494 |
| Electrical Engineer | 299 | 288 |
| Fire Safety Engineer | 171 | 167 |
| Mechanical Engineer | 457 | 441 |
| Engineer - Subtotal | 2,487 | 2,390 |
| Quantity Surveyor | 138 | 134 |
| Quantity Surveyor – Subtotal | 138 | 134 |
| Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 1 | 32 | 33 |
| Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 2 | 82 | 79 |
| Temp. Structures - Subtotal | 114 | 112 |
| Total | 27,405 | 26,842 |

*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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Registered plumbers | | |
| Drainage | 11,667 | 11,275 |
| Fire protection | 562 | 560 |
| Gas fitting | 12,051 | 11,678 |
| Irrigation (non-agricultural) | 11,620 | 11,193 |
| Mechanical services | 13,513 | 13,518 |
| Roofing (storm water) | 12,525 | 12,144 |
| Sanitary | 12,077 | 11,628 |
| Water supply | 11,582 | 11,158 |
| Licensed plumbers | | |
| Drainage | 8,744 | 8,756 |
| Fire protection | 118 | 111 |
| Gas fitting | 8,562 | 8,469 |
| Irrigation (non-agricultural) | 9,513 | 9,464 |
| Mechanical services | 2,654 | 2,717 |
| Roofing (storm water) | 8,186 | 8,192 |
| Sanitary | 8,666 | 8,633 |
| Water supply | 9,479 | 9,431 |

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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Registered plumbers | | |
| Backflow prevention | 592 | 540 |
| Refrigerated air conditioning | 889 | 853 |
| Type A appliance conversion | 162 | 153 |
| Type A appliance servicing work | 6,984 | 7,139 |
| Type B gas fitting | 324 | 315 |
| Type B gas fitting advanced | 41 | 40 |
| Licensed plumbers | | |
| Backflow prevention | 1,489 | 1,420 |
| Refrigerated air conditioning | 1,146 | 1,143 |
| Type A appliance conversion | 588 | 566 |
| Type A appliance servicing work | 6,439 | 6,595 |
| Type B gas fitting | 353 | 362 |
| Type B gas fitting advanced | 136 | 137 |

Enquiries, Inspections and Complaints

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 8: Volume of calls – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| VBA Queues | 46,094 | 53,260 |
| Customer Service Unit Queues | 26,919 | 26,775 |

Table 9: Calls by performance (abandoned) – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|------------|---------------|---------------|
| VBA Queues | 6.70% | 4.05% |
| CSU Queues | 5.65% | 3.86% |

Table 10: Calls by service levels (calls answered in 20 seconds) – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| VBA All Queues | 62.00% | 77.21% |
| CSU Queues | 57.00% | 75.98% |

Table 11: Volume of email, mail, in person – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| Email | 3,961 | 4,925 |
| Mail | 22,768 | 23,413 |
| In person | 2,614 | 2,527 |

Table 12: Volume of new complaints by type – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|----------|---------------|---------------|
| Total | 1,074 | 686 |
| Building | 424 | 331 |
| Plumbing | 650 | 355 |

Table 13: Volume of Owner-Builder applications – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Applications received* | 1,365 | 1,972 |
| Certificate of Consent issued | 1,231 | 2,386 |

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

Table 14: Volume of building modifications and appeals for the Building Appeals Board – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Appeal/Disputes/Other Proceedings applications* | 50 | 43 |
| Modifications** | 190 | 198 |

* Includes matters that were scheduled but adjourned or withdrawn

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

Table 15: Terminations of Building Surveyor Applications – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Applications received | 141 | 129 |
| Applications closed | 245 | 39 |

Table 16: Pro-Active Inspection Program

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Actual number of inspections | 389 | N/A |
| Elements inspected | 5,110 | N/A |

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

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Levy collected | \$10,641,064 | \$8,931,807 |

Table 18: Building statistics – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Number of building permits reported | 25,681 | 23,749 |
| Reported cost of building works (\$M) | 7,664.00 | 6,329.00 |

Table 19: Plumbing statistics – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Compliance certificates sold to practitioners | 86,390 | 83,744 |
| Compliance certificates lodged by practitioners | 83,767 | 77,845 |
| Revenue from compliance certificates sold | \$2,796,793 | \$2,652,263 |

Table 20: Plumbing Audit statistics – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Plumbing audits | | |
| Plumbing audits and Inspections completed | 5,189 | 2,370 |
| Audit non-compliance rate (%) | 15.32% | 13.63% |

Table 21: Practitioner discipline (building)

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Number of matters pending inquiry (building) | 65 | N/A |
| Successful Inquiry Outcomes (allegations proven) | 14 | N/A |
| Number of shown cause notices issued | 21 | N/A |
| Number of finalised disciplinary outcomes | 24 | N/A |

Table 22: Investigations completed – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Plumbing Investigations | | |
| Investigations commenced | 161 | N/A |
| Investigations completed | 151 | 172 |
| Average days taken for current investigations | 96 | N/A |
| Average days taken to complete investigations | 65 | N/A |
| Investigation completion timeliness | 88% | N/A |
| Building Investigations | | |
| Investigations commenced | 131 | N/A |
| Investigations completed | 159 | 126 |
| Average days taken for current investigations | 161 | N/A |
| Average days taken to complete investigations | 310 | N/A |
| Investigation completion timeliness | 56% | N/A |

Table 23: Levy Audit – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Number of Field Audits Completed | 23 | 17 |
| Number of Desk Reviews Completed | 4 | 6 |
| Total Audits and Review Completed | 27 | 25 |
| Number of audits with non-compliant result | 3 | N/A |

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 24: Plumbing Phone Data – at month end

Due to a system upgrade the telephone data for Q1, Q2 and Q3 2016-17 is unavailable at the time of publication. Q1, Q2 and Q3 telephone data will be reported in the Q4 report.

Table 25: Building Phone Data – at month end

Due to a system upgrade the telephone data for Q1, Q2 and Q3 2016-17 is unavailable at the time of publication. Q1, Q2 and Q3 telephone data will be reported in the Q4 report.

Table 26: Temporary structures, modifications and accreditations – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Volume of temporary structure occupancy permits issued | 20 | 15 |
| Volume of plumbing modification applications | 127 | 130 |
| Plumbing modification applications approval rate | 92% | 94.60% |
| Volume of building product accreditation certificates issued | 0 | 0 |

Table 27: Volume of security of payment – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Applications lodged | 95 | 75 |
| Applications determined | 60 | 41 |
| Applications not determined or not yet determined | 35 | 34 |
| Claimed amounts | \$26,161,049 | \$21,970,938 |
| Adjudicated amounts | \$7,032,372 | \$7,044,137 |

Table 28: Building Audit – over quarter

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Number of audits completed (Builder) | 0 | N/A |
| Number of audits completed (RBS) | 0 | N/A |
| Total Audits and Review Completed | 0 | N/A |

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 29: Inquiries and prosecutions

| | Q3 2016-17 finalised | Q3 2015-16 finalised |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Building | | |
| Building practitioner disciplinary hearings held by BPB | 20 | 23 |
| Prosecutions completed | 6 | 13 |
| Plumbing | | |
| Plumbing practitioner disciplinary hearings held | 1 | 1 |
| Prosecutions completed | 6 | 10 |

Table 30: Website and mail reach

| | Q3 2016-17 | Q3 2015-16 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Website visits | 303,017 | 157,092 |
| VBA mail distribution | 151,732 | 54,993 |

*These are non-finalised numbers. The final number is not available yet.

* Note there were only three mail distributions in Q3 2015-16

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 | 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 27] A BPB Inquiry is a hearing into a registered building practitioner's 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 | 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 26] 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. |