

# Organisation and Industry Data Update

Quarter 1, 2017 – 2018

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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. Unless otherwise stated the figures presented represent activities undertaken within the three month period defined.

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](http://www.data.vic.gov.au), and on our data page at [www.vba.vic.gov.au](http://www.vba.vic.gov.au).

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## Practitioner Statistics

**Table 1: Applications for Licence / Registration / Revocation of Suspension of Registration Lodged**

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Building	617	617	471	1780
Plumbing <sup>1</sup>	533	533	325	1403
<b>Total</b>	<b>1150</b>	<b>1150</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>3183</b>

**Table 2: Application for Licence / Registration / Revocation of Suspension Finalised**

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Building	568	568	535	2115
Plumbing <sup>2</sup>	485	485	409	1625
<b>Total</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>3740</b>

**Table 3: Renewed Licences / Registrations**

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Building <sup>3</sup>	5,304	5,304	6,054	25,756
Plumbing	3,774	3,774	3,393	15,184
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,078</b>	<b>9,078</b>	<b>9,447</b>	<b>40,940</b>

**Table 4: Licenced/Registered Practitioners – at quarter end**

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Building <sup>4</sup>	22,751	22,751	22,548	22,658
Plumbing <sup>5</sup>	26,977	26,977	26,586	26,862
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,728</b>	<b>49,728</b>	<b>49,134</b>	<b>49,520</b>

<sup>1</sup> Excludes reinstatement applications and amendment applications

<sup>2</sup> Excludes reinstatement applications and amendment applications

<sup>3</sup> Number of registrations where the building practitioner paid the annual fee and provided proof of insurance cover (if required). Excludes applications to renew a registration that were lodged (commenced being lodged from March 2017).

<sup>4</sup> Fluctuations between quarters are largely attributed to the suspension of registration as a result of the practitioner failing to pay the annual fee and provide proof of insurance by registration anniversary date or expiry of registration.

<sup>5</sup> Fluctuations between quarters are largely attributed the expiry of plumbing registrations/licences as a result of the practitioner failing to apply to renew the licence/registration before the expiry date.

Table 5: Registered Building Practitioners by Category<sup>6</sup> – at quarter end

Registration category*	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Builder - Demolition - Low Rise	247	247	245	252
Builder - Demolition - Med Rise	68	68	66	67
Builder - Demolition - Unlimited	39	39	39	44
<b>Demolition - Subtotal</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>363</b>
Commercial Builder - Limited	3,146	3,146	3,066	3,178
Commercial Builder - Unlimited	2,140	2,140	2,142	2,140
<b>Commercial Builder - Subtotal</b>	<b>5,286</b>	<b>5,286</b>	<b>5,208</b>	<b>5,318</b>
Domestic Builder - Limited	2,710	2,710	2,710	2,728
Domestic Builder - Manager	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,085
Domestic Builder - Unlimited	11,422	11,422	11,384	11,350
<b>Domestic Builder - Subtotal</b>	<b>15,229</b>	<b>15,229</b>	<b>15,173</b>	<b>15,163</b>
Building Inspector - Limited	234	234	220	231
Building Inspector - Unlimited	423	423	430	431
<b>Building Inspector - Subtotal</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>662</b>
Building Surveyor - Limited	127	127	109	124
Building Surveyor - Unlimited	551	551	557	558
<b>Building Surveyor - Subtotal</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>678</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>682</b>
Draftsperson Building Design (Architectural)	2,083	2,083	2,098	2,083
Draftsperson Building Design (Interior)	190	190	190	187
Draftsperson Building Design (Services)	172	172	166	174
<b>Draftsperson - Subtotal</b>	<b>2,445</b>	<b>2,445</b>	<b>2,454</b>	<b>2,444</b>
Civil Engineer	1,619	1,619	1,534	1,569
Electrical Engineer	301	301	302	304
Fire Safety Engineer	173	173	176	174
Mechanical Engineer	455	455	460	460
<b>Engineer - Subtotal</b>	<b>2,548</b>	<b>2,548</b>	<b>2,472</b>	<b>2,507</b>
Quantity Surveyor	139	139	139	141
Person who erects or supervises the erection of prescribed temporary structures – Limited to scaffolding stages and towers <sup>7</sup>	30	30	33	33
Person who erects or supervises the erection of prescribed temporary structures – Limited to tents and marquees <sup>8</sup>	76	76	81	82
<b>Temp. Structures - Subtotal</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>256</b>
Person responsible for a building project - Project Manager (Domestic) <sup>9</sup>	0	0	NA	NA
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,442</b>	<b>27,442</b>	<b>27,087</b>	<b>27,395</b>

<sup>6</sup> An individual may be registered in more than one category.

<sup>7</sup> Previously "Class 1"

<sup>8</sup> Previously "Class 2"

<sup>9</sup> New class introduced on 1 July 2017 (no persons registered in this class as at 30/9/17)

**Table 6: Plumbing Practitioners Holding Licence / Registration by Main Class**  
– at quarter end

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Registered plumbers</b>				
Drainage	11,762	11,762	11,478	11,695
Fire protection	567	567	569	564
Gas fitting	12,124	12,124	11,851	12,068
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	11,731	11,731	11,401	11,656
Mechanical services	13,416	13,416	13,479	13,432
Roofing (storm water)	12,617	12,617	12,323	12,526
Sanitary	12,197	12,197	11,833	12,118
Water supply	11,687	11,687	11,365	11,618
<b>Licensed plumbers</b>				
Drainage	8,694	8,694	8,687	8,669
Fire protection	117	117	116	117
Gas fitting	8,583	8,583	8,470	8,537
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	9,485	9,485	9,430	9,459
Mechanical services	2,610	2,610	2,660	2,620
Roofing (storm water)	8,150	8,150	8,149	8,147
Sanitary	8,645	8,645	8,600	8,615
Water supply	9,456	9,456	9,398	9,423

**Table 7: Total Plumbing Practitioners Holding Licence / Registration by Specialised Class**  
– at quarter end

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Registered plumbers</b>				
Backflow prevention	589	589	578	592
Refrigerated air conditioning	890	890	856	887
Type A appliance conversion	160	160	156	162
Type A appliance servicing work	6,882	6,882	7,067	6,926
Type B gas fitting	317	317	318	318
Type B gas fitting advanced	42	42	41	41
<b>Licensed plumbers</b>				
Backflow prevention	1,507	1,507	1,458	1,487
Refrigerated air conditioning	1,152	1,152	1,146	1,140
Type A appliance conversion	587	587	576	586
Type A appliance servicing work	6,337	6,337	6,480	6,366
Type B gas fitting	342	342	363	350
Type B gas fitting advanced	128	128	136	133

Table 8: Security of Payment<sup>10</sup>

	Q4 2016-17	FYTD 2016-17	Q4 2015-16	FY 2015-16
Applications lodged	107	360	77	293
Applications determined	56	230	45	189
Applications not determined or not yet determined	51	130	32	104
Claimed amounts (\$)	20,579,762	65,348,271	14,994,284	73,336,444
Adjudicated amounts (\$)	5,620,574	20,825,695	3,391,751	20,240,603

Table 9: Internal Review of Registration and Disciplinary Decisions<sup>11</sup>

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Registration Reviews</b>				
Applications received	36	36	4	84
<b>Completed within 28 days:</b>				
Affirmed decisions	31	31	0	67
Amended decisions	0	0	0	1
Substitution of decisions	2	2	0	10
Total completed	33	33	0	78
<b>Disciplinary Reviews</b>				
Applications received	4	4	0	7
<b>Completed within 28 days:</b>				
Affirmed decisions	2	2	0	0
Amended decisions	2	2	0	4
Substitution of decisions	0	0	0	2
Total completed	4	4	0	6

<sup>10</sup> SOP figures for Q1 2017-18 not available at time of publication

<sup>11</sup> Internal review function commenced operation on September 1st 2016



## Building and Plumbing Activity

Table 10: Building Permit Activity<sup>12</sup>

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Number of building permits reported	19,982	19,982	27,736	109,696
Reported cost of building works (\$B)	6.4	6.4	8.4	32.8

Table 11: Terminations of Building Surveyor Applications

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Applications received	185	185	95	753
Applications closed	258	258	76	759

Table 12: Plumbing Compliance Certificates

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Compliance certificates sold to practitioners	92,165	92,165	97,808	380,038
Compliance certificates lodged by practitioners	99,739	99,739	96,722	300,732
Revenue from compliance certificates sold (\$)	3,022,007	3,022,007	3,1613,609	12,302,106

Table 13: Temporary Structures, Modifications and Accreditations

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Volume of temporary structure occupancy permits issued	21	21	19	86
Volume of plumbing modification applications	119	119	130	533
Plumbing modification applications approval rate	91%	91%	92.2%	91%
Volume of building product accreditation certificates issued	1	1	0	1

Table 14: Owner Builder Permit Applications

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Applications received	1,668	1,668	2,061	6,341
Certificates of consent issued	1,321	1,321	2,116	5,464

<sup>12</sup> September figures not final at time of publication, includes data from July and August only.

## Investigations, Prosecutions and Disciplinary Action

Table 15: Investigations

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Building Practitioners</b>				
Investigations completed	100	100	88	489
Average days taken to complete investigations	172	172	569	347
<b>Plumbing Practitioners</b>				
Investigations Completed	172	172	194	698
Average days taken to complete investigations	95	95	99	85

Table 16: Complaints

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Building</b>				
Complaints received	430	460	479	1,741
<b>Plumbing</b>				
Complaints received	498	498	693	2,490

Table 17: Practitioner Discipline

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Building Practitioners</b>				
BPB Disciplinary Proceedings conducted	18	18	33	109
Number of Shown Cause Notices issued	20	20	0	67
Number of finalised disciplinary outcomes	26	26	26	82
<b>Plumbing Practitioners</b>				
Plumbing Disciplinary Inquiries conducted	7	7	6	28

Table 18: Prosecutions

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Building</b>				
Prosecutions completed	6	6	16	39
<b>Plumbing</b>				
Prosecutions completed	2	2	3	21

Table 19: Practitioner VCAT and AAT Appeals

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Building</b>				
VCAT Appeals Heard	11	11	12	38
AAT Appeals Heard	4	4	21	56
<b>Plumbing</b>				
VCAT Appeals Heard	0	0	1	2
AAT Appeals Heard	0	0	0	0

## Audits and Inspections

Table 20: Building Permit Levy Audit

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Number of audits completed	26	26	34	89
Number of Desk Reviews completed	3	3	6	16
Number of audits with non-compliant result	2	2	2	13

Table 21: Pro-Active Inspection Program

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Number of inspections	220	220	552	1,779
Elements inspected	3,268	3,268	5,249	20,534

Table 22: Plumbing Audits

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Plumbing audits and Inspections completed	3,976	3,976	4662	18,573
Audit non-compliance rate (%)	18%	18%	13%	15%

## Technical Advice and Outreach

Table 23: Technical Advice Line – calls received

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
<b>Building</b>				
General Tech Advice	700	700	415	1,972
Building Permits	177	177	151	658
Defective Building Work	121	121	130	795
Practitioner Registration	88	88	81	349
Plumbing	78	78	36	198
Pool and Spa	74	74	39	293
Contractual	65	65	47	371
Insurance	62	62	71	342
Health and Amenity	58	58	43	232
Australian Standards	45	45	44	140
<b>Plumbing</b>				
Drainage	515	515	456	2,126
Gas Fitting	500	500	500	1,942
Roofing (Stormwater)	446	446	412	1,893
Compliance Certificate	300	300	145	940
Water Supply	295	295	261	1,130
Sanitary	177	177	168	671
Modifications	135	135	87	515
Legislation	130	130	28	149
Mechanical Services	115	115	107	435
Unregulated Plumbing	108	108	158	721

Table 24: Website and Mail Reach

	Q1 2017-18	FYTD 2017-18	Q1 2016-17	FY 2016-17
Website visits	382,347	382,347	313,390	1,341,018
VBA mail distribution	104,248	104,248	150,312	482,200

## 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).
AAT	Administrative Appeals Tribunal
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.
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.
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. 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> .
FY	Financial year
FYTD	Financial year to date

Inspection	An examination of building or plumbing works.
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.
Security of payment (SOP)	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.
VCAT	Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

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.