

Organisation and industry data update

Quarter 2, 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 include information from a wide range of activities performed by the VBA, such as issuing 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 improvement
- 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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14	Q2 2012-13
Building	635	922	590	651
Plumbing	621	677	604	710
Total	1,256	1,599	1,194	1,361

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14	Q2 2012-13
Building	713	1,081	686	589
Plumbing	699	794	791	686
Total	1,412	1,875	1,477	1,275

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14	Q2 2012-13
Building	6,422	5,985	5,606	6,381
Plumbing	3,994	2,717	2,446	3,948
Total	10,416	8,702	8,052	10,329

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

	As at Dec-15	As at Nov-15	As at Oct-15	As at Sep-15
Building	22,224	22,242	22,081	21,958
Plumbing	26,688	26,635	26,598	26,558
Total	48,912	48,877	48,679	48,516

Note: Fluctuations in the total number of registered/licensed practitioners from month-to-month is largely attributed to the suspension of licences/registration due to a failure to renew before the expiry of the licence/registration, and subsequent renewal of the licence/registration.

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

Registration category	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14	Q2 2012-13
Builder - Demolition - Low Rise	230	216	204	190
Builder - Demolition - Med Rise	65	61	61	61
Builder - Demolition - Unlimited	39	35	34	35
Demolition - Subtotal	334	312	299	286
Commercial Builder - Limited	2,965	2,670	2,390	2,232
Commercial Builder - Unlimited	2,134	2,110	2,113	2,207
Commercial Builder - Subtotal	5,099	4,780	4,503	4,439
Domestic Builder - Limited	2,638	2,382	2,049	2,007
Domestic Builder - Manager	1,094	1,127	1,126	1,165
Domestic Builder - Unlimited	11,277	11,093	11,110	11,209
Domestic Builder - Subtotal	15,009	14,602	14,285	14,381
Building Inspector - Limited	226	212	194	181
Building Inspector - Unlimited	433	422	411	394
Building Inspector - Subtotal	659	634	605	575
Building Surveyor - Limited	92	92	71	57
Building Surveyor - Unlimited	549	540	521	519
Building Surveyor - Subtotal	641	632	592	576
Draftsperson Building Design (Architectural)	2,070	2,039	2,013	2,015
Draftsperson Building Design (Interior)	182	167	160	163
Draftsperson Building Design (Services)	171	168	172	178
Draftsperson - Subtotal	2,423	2,374	2,345	2,356
Civil Engineer	1,488	1,432	1,370	1,295
Electrical Engineer	290	282	266	248
Fire Safety Engineer	165	148	138	130
Mechanical Engineer	446	425	412	398
Engineer - Subtotal	2,389	2,287	2,186	2,071
Quantity Surveyor	132	129	127	122
Quantity Surveyor – Subtotal	132	129	127	122
Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 1	33	30	30	31
Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 2	78	78	82	82
Temp. Structures - Subtotal	111	108	112	113
Total	26,797	25,858	25,054	24,919

Note: 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 month end

	As at Dec-15	As at Nov-15	As at Oct-15	As at Sep-15
Registered plumbers				
Drainage	11,449	11,412	11,402	11,390
Fire protection	570	572	571	571
Gas fitting	11,835	11,804	11,805	11,801
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	11,368	11,333	11,318	11,308
Mechanical services	13,788	13,791	13,800	13,824
Roofing (storm water)	12,343	12,305	12,294	12,279
Sanitary	11,769	11,723	11,715	11,697
Water supply	11,331	11,297	11,282	11,275
Licensed plumbers				
Drainage	8,775	8,766	8,745	8,750
Fire protection	111	111	113	113
Gas fitting	8,462	8,449	8,410	8,397
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	9,454	9,439	9,413	9,406
Mechanical services	2,724	2,728	2,734	2,724
Roofing (storm water)	8,193	8,193	8,172	8,172
Sanitary	8,646	8,643	8,622	8,625
Water supply	9,424	9,409	9,384	9,375

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

	As at Dec-15	As at Nov-15	As at Oct-15	As at Sep-15
Registered plumbers				
Backflow prevention	539	533	524	514
Refrigerated air conditioning	848	847	846	850
Type A appliance conversion	143	139	139	136
Type A appliance servicing work	7,413	7,422	7,422	7,461
Type B gas fitting	319	321	320	318
Type B gas fitting advanced	39	40	41	41
Licensed plumbers				
Backflow prevention	1,396	1,390	1,384	1,374
Refrigerated air conditioning	1,123	1,127	1,131	1,117
Type A appliance conversion	555	552	552	550
Type A appliance servicing work	6,621	6,631	6,632	6,634
Type B gas fitting	358	355	350	350
Type B gas fitting advanced	140	140	139	140

Table 8: Plumbing Examinations pass rate – at month end

	As at Dec-15	As at Nov-15	As at Oct-15	As at Sep-15
Journey man - 1st attempt	N/A	26%	45%	45%
Journey man - subsequent attempt	N/A	51%	63%	61%

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
VBA Queues	54,355	N/A
Customer Service Unit Queues	26,073	22,932

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
VBA Queues	4.63%	N/A
CSU Queues	4.13%	7%

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
VBA All Queues	74.94%	N/A
CSU Queues	71.46%	74.66%

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
Email	5,288	4,543
Mail	25,501	27,162
In person	2,450	3,468

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
Total	647	N/A
Building	318	N/A
Plumbing	329	N/A

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
¹ Applications received	2,168	2,164
Certificate of Consent issued	2,242	2,329

Table 15: Volume of building inspections – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14
BACV onsite conciliation inspections	104	164	138
Domestic Building Contract Act inspections	60	32	26
VBA Inspections	*98	*27	*35
* Denotes the minimum number of inspections carried out for each quarter. Only the first inspection is recorded in the database so these figures should not be relied upon			

Table 16: Volume of building modifications and appeals for the Building Appeals Board – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14
*Appeal/Disputes/Other Proceedings applications	44	N/A	N/A
** Modifications	277	N/A	N/A
* includes matters that were scheduled but adjourned or withdrawn			
** matters determined, some applications will have more than one matter			

Table 17: Terminations of Building Surveyor Applications – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14
Applications received	197	100	52
Applications closed	170	65	60

¹ Table 6 - Represents number of applications received within a 90 day period but may include processing of applications received in the previous quarter.

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
- Audit
- Practitioner Intelligence and Levy
- Practitioner Discipline

Table 18: Levy collected – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
Levy collected	\$10,463,084	\$9,310,082

Table 19: Building statistics – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
Number of reporting building surveyors and lodging organisations	341	331
Number of building permits issued	27,887	27,517
Reported cost of building works	\$7,952M	\$7,290M

Table 20: Plumbing statistics – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14
Compliance certificates sold to practitioners	94,072	90,461	81,413
Compliance certificates lodged by practitioners	94,051	92,333	N/A
Revenue from compliance certificates sold (\$)	\$2,984,542	\$2,797,215	\$2,446,353

Table 21: Audit statistics – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16
Plumbing audits	
Plumbing audits completed	2,795
Plumbing audits as a percentage of lodged compliance certificates	2.97%
Failure rate	12.76%

Table 22: Investigation activity – over quarter

Q2 2015-16	
Plumbing audits	
Plumbing practitioner investigations	105
Building audits	
Building practitioner investigations	78

Table 23: Levy Audit – over quarter

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14
Number of Field Audits Completed	13	14	7
Number of Desk Audits Completed	0	1	1
Number of Desk Reviews Completed	4	11	6
Total Audits and Review Completed	17	26	14
Levy Recovered from Normal Audits	\$39,735.38	\$37,727.88	\$29,261.95
Unusual Audit Findings	\$0.00	\$36,249.49 [^]	\$24,261.95 [*]
Net Levy Recovered After Unusual Audit Findings	\$39,735.38	\$73,977.37	\$54,082.88

[^] A private lodging organisation was found to have one staged building permit issued but not reported to the VBA. This desk audit was carried out under the *Monthly Staged Building Permit Monitoring Program*. As a result of the desk audit, it was escalated to a field audit that is underway.

^{*} A private lodging organisation was found to have 35 building permits issued but not reported to the VBA. This field audit was carried out under the *Staged Building Permit Audit Program*. Staged building permits are usually issued for high-value building works, particularly those of commercial buildings.

Technical and Regulation

Purpose

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

Key activities

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

Table 24: Plumbing Phone Data – at month ending

The Top 10 call categories for the period Oct – Dec 2015 make up 85% of the total inbound calls (3,941) for which technical advice was provided.

	Q2 2015-16 Call volume	Q2 2015-16 % of total call volume*	As at Dec-15	As at Nov-15	As at Oct-15
Top 10 call categories sorted by Q2 total					
Drainage	690	18	146	252	292
Gas Fitting	565	14	143	209	213
Roofing (Stormwater)	367	9	102	138	127
Compliance Certificate	363	9	108	105	150
Water Supply	335	9	81	95	159
Unregulated Plumbing	283	7	85	96	102
Legislation	229	6	57	61	111
Sanitary	221	6	47	81	93
Modifications	127	3	26	54	47
Mechanical Services	164	4	37	62	65

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

Table 25: Building Phone Data – at month ending

The Top 10 call categories for the period Oct – Dec 2015 make up 51% of the total inbound calls (2,844) for which technical advice was provided.

	Q2 2015-16 Call volume	Q2 2015-16 % of total call volume*	As at Dec-15	As at Nov-15	As at Oct-15
Top 10 call categories sorted by Q2 total					
Building Permits	236	8%	67	82	87
Defective Building Work	226	8%	45	77	104
Australian Standards	165	6%	51	39	75
General Technical Advice	158	6%	46	57	55
Practitioner Registration	146	5%	30	45	71
Pool / Spa	138	5%	46	51	41
Contractual	120	4%	37	50	33
Protection Work	118	4%	40	32	46
Insurance	76	3%	21	17	38
Health & Amenity	75	3%	22	33	20

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

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15	Q2 2013-14	Q2 2012-13
Volume of temporary structure occupancy permits issued	43	24	27	17
Volume of plumbing modification applications	116	107	67	99
Plumbing modification applications approval rate	94.0%	100.0%	98.5%	94.9%
Volume of building product accreditation certificates issued	1	1	2	2

Table 27: Volume of security of payment – over quarter

	Q1 2015-16	Q1 2014-15	Q1 2013-14
Applications lodged	93	88	76
Applications determined	60	65	65
Applications not determined or not yet determined	33	23	11
Claimed amounts	\$23,778,509	\$31,707,119	\$15,619,626
Adjudicated amounts	\$6,148,905	\$11,130,985	\$11,547,622

Note: This table contains the Q1 data as the Q2 data is not due to be submitted until 31 January 2016 in accordance with the ANA Conditions of Authorisation. Office of the CEO

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 28: Inquiries and prosecutions – year to date

	Q2 2015-16 finalised	Current not finalised
Building		
Prosecutions	5	23
Plumbing		
Disciplinary Inquiries	7	5
Prosecutions	6	10

Table 29: Website and mail reach

	Q2 2015-16	Q2 2014-15
Website visits	128,934	105,328
VBA mail distribution	N/A	N/A

Glossary of Terms

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	<p>Building permit levy.</p> <p>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.</p>
Occupancy permit	<p>Issued by the building surveyor after final inspection of the building; it shows that the building is safe and suitable for occupation.</p>
On-site conciliation technical inspections	<p>Inspections conducted by the VBA to help resolve a domestic building dispute between parties that are willing to participate in the conciliations process.</p> <p>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.</p>
Open Investigation	<p>[see Table 21] Investigation being conducted by the VBA that has not concluded.</p>
Owner-builder	<p>Someone who carries out building on their own property. Owner-builders are not in the business of building.</p>
Planning permit	<p>A permit obtained from the relevant local council that relates to the zoning, use and development of land.</p>
Plumbing modification	<p>A variation of the <i>Plumbing Modifications 2008</i>.</p> <p>The modification process allows for one-off and site-specific variations to the technical requirements to provide acceptable solutions that achieve the necessary performance.</p>
Plumbing practitioner	<p>Includes fire protection, water supply, sanitary, roofing (stormwater), mechanical services, irrigation (non-agricultural), gas-fitting and drainage classes.</p>
Practitioner	<p>A building practitioner and plumbing practitioner.</p>
Quantity Surveyor	<p>A quantity surveyor is a trained professional who estimates and manages the cost of construction projects.</p>
Registered builder	<p>A building practitioner registered with the Building Practitioners Board to complete limited or unlimited work.</p>
Registered or licensed plumber	<p>A plumbing practitioner registered or licensed with the VBA to legally carry out any work within the defined classes.</p>
Request for inspection under s.44 s.44	<p>Inspections requested directly to the VBA by an owner or builder in dispute.</p> <p>Section 44 of the <i>Building Act 1993</i> – Refusal of occupancy permit.</p>
Security of payment	<p>[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.</p>
Suspensions	<p>Refers to practitioners who are suspended from practising.</p>
Temporary structure	<p>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.</p>
VBA	<p>Victorian Building Authority.</p>