

Organisation and industry data update

Quarter 1, 2016 – 2017

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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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Building	453	778
Plumbing	306	537
Total	759	1,315

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Building	558	552
Plumbing	413	541
Total	971	1,093

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Building	6,054	5,976
Plumbing	3,393	3,424
Total	9,447	9,400

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Building	22,548	21,958
Plumbing	26,586	26,558
Total	49,134	48,516

Table 5: Total number of registrations by category of building practitioner at end of quarter

Registration category*	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Builder - Demolition - Low Rise	245	225
Builder - Demolition - Med Rise	66	65
Builder - Demolition - Unlimited	39	38
Demolition - Subtotal	350	328
Commercial Builder - Limited	3,066	2,901
Commercial Builder - Unlimited	2,142	2,114
Commercial Builder - Subtotal	5,208	5,015
Domestic Builder - Limited	2,710	2,569
Domestic Builder - Manager	1,079	1,088
Domestic Builder - Unlimited	11,384	11,158
Domestic Builder - Subtotal	15,173	14,815
Building Inspector - Limited	220	219
Building Inspector - Unlimited	430	425
Building Inspector - Subtotal	650	644
Building Surveyor - Limited	109	94
Building Surveyor - Unlimited	557	543
Building Surveyor - Subtotal	666	637
Draftsperson Building Design (Architectural)	2,098	2,056
Draftsperson Building Design (Interior)	190	175
Draftsperson Building Design (Services)	166	165
Draftsperson - Subtotal	2,454	2,396
Civil Engineer	1,534	1,462
Electrical Engineer	302	280
Fire Safety Engineer	176	152
Mechanical Engineer	460	434
Engineer - Subtotal	2,472	2,328
Quantity Surveyor	139	130
Quantity Surveyor – Subtotal	139	130
Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 1	33	31
Supervisor - Temporary Structure Class 2	81	77
Temp. Structures - Subtotal	114	108
Total	27,226	26,401

*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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Registered plumbers		
Drainage	11,478	11,390
Fire protection	569	571
Gas fitting	11,851	11,801
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	11,401	11,308
Mechanical services	13,479	13,824
Roofing (storm water)	12,323	12,279
Sanitary	11,833	11,697
Water supply	11,365	11,275
Licensed plumbers		
Drainage	8,687	8,750
Fire protection	116	113
Gas fitting	8,470	8,397
Irrigation (non-agricultural)	9,430	9,406
Mechanical services	2,660	2,724
Roofing (storm water)	8,149	8,172
Sanitary	8,600	8,625
Water supply	9,398	9,375

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Registered plumbers		
Backflow prevention	578	514
Refrigerated air conditioning	856	850
Type A appliance conversion	156	136
Type A appliance servicing work	7,067	7,461
Type B gas fitting	318	318
Type B gas fitting advanced	41	41
Licensed plumbers		
Backflow prevention	1,458	1,374
Refrigerated air conditioning	1,146	1,117
Type A appliance conversion	576	550
Type A appliance servicing work	6,480	6,634
Type B gas fitting	363	350
Type B gas fitting advanced	136	140

Table 8: Plumbing Examinations pass rate – at quarter end

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Journey man - 1st attempt	30%	35%

*From Q1 2016-17 Licensing and Registration will only report Journey man - 1st attempt

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
VBA Queues	43,187	61,245
Customer Service Unit Queues	25,112	22,729

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
VBA Queues	8.55%	4.06%
CSU Queues	4.87%	3.30%

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
VBA All Queues	55.98%	78.49%
CSU Queues	57.04%	78.28%

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Email	6,555	3,036
Mail	23,689	28,682
In person	2,859	3,096

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Total	1,172	656
Building	479	247
Plumbing	693	409

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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Applications received*	2,061	2,249
Certificate of Consent issued	2,116	2,161

*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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Appeal/Disputes/Other Proceedings applications*	54	48
Modifications**	191	263

* 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

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Applications received	95	105
Applications closed	76	101

Table 17: Pro-Active Inspection Program

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Actual number of inspections	549	N/A
Elements inspected	5,407	N/A

Compliance and Performance

Purpose

Undertake audits and investigations, 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

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

Table 18: Levy collected

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Levy collected	\$10,765,822	\$10,128,355

Table 19: Building permit activity

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Number of building permits reported	27,736	28,320
Reported cost of building works (\$M)	\$8,406.75	\$7,912.72

Table 20: Plumbing compliance certificate activity

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Compliance certificates sold to practitioners	97,800	98,343
Compliance certificates lodged by practitioners	96,722	95,958
Revenue from compliance certificates sold	\$3,161,609	\$3,117,863

Table 21: Plumbing Audit

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Plumbing audits		
Plumbing audits and inspections completed	4,662	4,269
Audit non-compliance rate (%)	12.75%	18.96%

Table 22: Practitioner discipline

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Number of matters pending inquiry	31	22
Successful Inquiry Outcomes (allegations proven)	31	15
Number of shown cause notices issued	0	N/A
Number of finalised disciplinary outcomes	26	15

Table 23: Investigations

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Plumbing Investigations		
Investigations commenced	155	321
Investigations completed	194	337
Average days taken for current investigations	123	N/A
Average days taken to complete investigations	99	N/A
Investigation completion timeliness	86%	N/A
Building Investigations		
Investigations commenced	105	86
Investigations completed	88	93
Average days taken for current investigations	324	N/A
Average days taken to complete investigations	569	N/A
Investigation completion timeliness	33%	N/A

Table 24: Building Audit

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Number of audits completed (Builder)	34	74
Number of audits completed (RBS)	27	67

Table 25: Levy Audit

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Number of Field Audits Completed	34	13
Number of Desk Reviews Completed	6	28
Total Audits and Review Completed	40	41
Number of audits with non-compliant result	2	0

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 26: Plumbing Phone Data – at month end

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

Table 27: Building Phone Data – at month end

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

Table 28: Temporary structures, modifications and accreditations – over quarter

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Volume of temporary structure occupancy permits issued	19	17
Volume of plumbing modification applications	130	153
Plumbing modification applications approval rate	92%	94%
Volume of building product accreditation certificates issued	0	0

Table 29: Volume of security of payment – over quarter

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Applications lodged	83	93
Applications determined	51	60
Applications not determined or not yet determined	32	33
Claimed amounts	\$10,314,029	\$23,778,509
Adjudicated amounts	\$2,941,654	\$6,148,905

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 30: Inquiries and prosecutions

	Q1 2016-17 finalised	Q1 2015-16 finalised
Building		
Building practitioner disciplinary hearings held by BPB	33	17
Prosecutions completed	16	13
Plumbing		
Plumbing practitioner disciplinary hearings held	6	0
Prosecutions completed	3	0

Table 31: Website and mail reach

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Website visits	313,390	234,118
VBA mail distribution	150,312	115,759

Table 32: Internal review

	Q1 2016-17	Q1 2015-16
Internal Review Applications*	4	N/A
<i>Affirmed decisions</i>	0	N/A
<i>Amended decisions</i>	0	N/A
<i>Substitution of decisions</i>	0	N/A

*The Internal review process was implemented on 1 September 2016. Following notice of a reviewable decision by the VBA about registration or discipline, a practitioner who is dissatisfied with the reviewable decision may apply for internal review of the reviewable decision via the VBA's internal review process. A practitioner may also apply to the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal for review of an internal review decision made by the VBA. The four internal review applications received in September 2016 were decided in October 2016.

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.