

Record attendance for building industry conference

More than 700 building practitioners gathered virtually to hear industry experts discuss emerging trends and take part in interactive forums at the Victorian Building Authority's (VBA) Building Surveyors' Conference.

The VBA's CEO Sue Eddy said the theme of the conference was 'reset and rebuild'.

"The building and construction industry is, and will continue to be, the lifeblood of our economy and building surveyors are a vital conduit to its health and safety."

"It was great to see so many practitioners attend the event. It's a mark of confidence in our industry that everyone is so energised to work together and find solutions to common challenges," Ms Eddy said.

"We all know that 2020 was an unprecedented year. The conference was a chance for us all to discuss the need to prepare for a fundamentally different new normal."

"Right now, we have key drivers converging, like a new digital frontier, accelerated development in technology and shifting consumer preferences coupled with the economic recovery from coronavirus."

"This year we'll adapt, even more, learn new ways to collaborate and embrace new technologies that will help the industry rebuild and flourish."

Among the 25 speakers who presented at the two-day event were Dame Judith Hackitt, who led the UK's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, commissioned following London's Grenfell Tower tragedy and Peter Shergold, the Chancellor of Western Sydney University.

Dame Judith shared the United Kingdom's experience of competence and regulatory responsibility while Mr Shergold spoke about how regulation is a key to public trust.

Victoria's State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini also announced the regulator's new Practitioner Education Series, an initiative which combines masterclasses and Essential Safety Measures webinars.

"This series is aimed at prioritised building industry learning needs identified from our other risk-based activities and will help support the industry by providing practical insights, evidence-based strategies and useful resources," Mr Cialini said.

"It is an exciting opportunity for practitioners to gain valuable learnings from subject matter experts."

Starting the series in late March will be a webinar from the VBA's Principal Fire Safety Engineer Dr Weng Poh.

Dr Poh will discuss the requirements for the construction of fire rated elements in construction.