

## Building permit bounce back a sign of industry rebound

Victoria's building industry had a strong 2020, despite being impacted by COVID-19, recording the highest level of permit approvals in the last two decades.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) issued 10 per cent more [building permits](#) in 2020, 113,430 up from 101,998 the previous year.

Despite the pandemic, the biggest increase in approvals were in regional Victoria, suggesting more people are moving to the regions.

VBA Chief Executive Officer Sue Eddy said the industry was resilient and the building and construction sector would continue to be paramount to economic recovery.

"Last year was unprecedented. This year we all need to continue to adapt and collaborate, even more than we have, to help industry flourish and our economy recover," she said.

In the first quarter of this financial year, building permits issued with a Building Permit Number were 13 per cent higher than the same period in 2019-20.

Unsurprisingly, mid-year data showed that there had been a drop in permit applications during the lockdown.

Domestic and residential buildings, which make up the majority of all building applications, fell to around 13 per cent and 12 per cent respectively in April, and 10 per cent and 11 per cent respectively in August. Despite this, they rebounded in September and continued to grow for the rest of the year.

Ms Eddy said new life will be breathed back into the industry with the Federal Government's [HomeBuilder Grant](#) Scheme and the State Government's \$5.3 billion [Big Housing Build](#).

The HomeBuilder scheme has generated over 25,000 applications from Victoria as of 26 February. The majority being for new builds 20,726 and 4,707 for renovations.

"We expect to see these numbers increase with the extension of the grant to 31 March. The flow on effect will be felt by many in the industry as the work commences.

"The HomeBuilder scheme and Victoria's Big Housing Build will supercharge our economic recovery through the pandemic and beyond," Ms Eddy said.

"The stimulus packages are a reflection of the Federal and State Government's confidence in the building and construction industry helping the economic recovery.

"More than ever, we must all work together to deliver the compliance and safety outcomes that the public not only expect but are entitled to."