Media Release

New VBA Powers to Build Consumer Confidence in Building Industry

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) will gain direct powers to register and discipline building practitioners when changes to the Building Act 1993 take effect tomorrow.

The changes will affect all Victorian builders and owner builders, with the VBA now acting as the single registering and disciplinary body.

The reforms introduced include:

- abolition of the Building Practitioners Board, with the VBA to register and discipline building practitioners and issue owner-builder certificates of consent
- banning builders from appointing private building surveyors for domestic building work. Surveyors will be appointed by the consumer
- building practitioners must re-apply for registration every five years
- moving to a “show cause” disciplinary process with the onus on building practitioners to show why they should not be disciplined
- the VBA to approve codes of conduct for building practitioners
- tightening requirements around becoming an owner-builder
- giving home buyers access to information on owner-built homes through an online register.

“These changes allow the VBA to be a more efficient and effective regulator, strengthening consumer protection in the domestic building market,” said VBA CEO Prue Digby.

“Building practitioners and consumers starting a building project should check the VBA website to understand how these changes may affect them.

“The VBA has engaged extensively with stakeholder groups to ensure the industry has been a part of the implementation process.”

Further measures to improve regulation will come into effect between now and July 2017, including: introducing offences for registered building practitioners undertaking work their registration does not authorise them to do, including as owner-builders

- prohibiting owner-builders from engaging practitioners to do such work, and
- allowing the VBA to appoint a manager to a private building surveyor business under certain circumstances.

For more information about the changes go to www.vba.vic.gov.au

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