

Research on building surveyors

Appendix - Questionnaire

Prepared for



Quantitative Report

May 2013

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**STUDY NO. 12/05/1432 BUILDING COMMISSION
BUILDING SURVEYOR (BS) SURVEY
(21 March 2013) – Revised Final**

March/April 2013

This survey is to be conducted online with Victorian-based registered and non-registered building surveyors (BS) and potential BS (included Registered Building Inspectors).

There are more than 500 Registered BS in Victoria in total with 380 'practising' in that they have issued permits in the past 3 years or work as Municipal Building Surveyors who may or may not be issuing permits. There is another group of Registered BS who are not issuing permits believed to number about 120.

The 'potential' BS include non-registered, qualified BS working under a senior MBS or a BS in private practice, or those working in government or for a statutory body. These potentials are not issuing permits in their own right. Potentials also include those newly qualified as a BS (but yet to be registered), Building Inspectors (BI, of which there are around 550) and full-time BS students. (Some BI will be studying BS on a part-time basis).

Study notes and sample sources

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A number of sampling sources have been identified for this survey.

- The Building Commission (BC) - for all registered BS and BI in Victoria.
- The Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS) whose members should include both registered and non-registered BS. Possibly some of these are BI and students (TBC).
- Universities and TAFE Colleges (via BC) for the 'potentials' who are BS students or newly qualified (TBC).

For privacy reasons we are unable to obtain access to the AIBS or University and TAFE College databases here but they were happy to send out the survey (link) to their members and students. This means some doubling up is likely to occur but to mitigate this we will:

- Ask AIBS to not include student members (or retirees) in their list of invited members.
- Mention in the covering email that if the same survey invitation has been received from the Building Commission to ignore and delete one of the invitation emails.

Target respondents

There are a number of actual and potential (BS) segments of interest which we hope will emerge naturally in the sample from the BC and AIBS sources.

1. Registered and practising BS who can be registered on either a limited or unlimited basis. These are either in private practice (issuing permits) or they are Municipal Building Surveyors (MBS) who may or may not be issuing permits.
2. Registered and non-practising BS (may be 'potentials' but more likely do not want to practice as a BS now).

3. Non-registered, qualified BS who have been qualified for some time (Likely to be working under a Municipal Building Surveyor or under a BS in private practice or for a government or statutory authority). In theory these are 'potentials' but they might not wish to be practising BS.
4. Newly qualified BS (in 2011-12) not registered (yet) and classed as potentials if not yet practising as a BS. (Some of these might fall under group 3 above)
5. BI or Building Inspectors (potentials). These can be registered on a limited or unlimited basis.
6. Full-time BS Students (potentials).

We believe all target respondents can be accommodated in the one questionnaire with appropriate skips programmed in to ensure that questions not relevant to any respondent group were asked of them.

Sample size

More than 550 invitations are expected to be issued to actual BS and a similar number or possibly more to the potentials. We can not predict responses but it is hoped that 150 responses to 200 responses will be received with BS and similar for the potentials.

Location quotas

None are to be set but because we are asking everyone to participate it is expected that the final sample will resemble the actual split of metropolitan and regional / rural based BS and BI. If necessary, results could be weighted to known statistics on this variable (and others).

Covering email

To be sent by BC/AIBS/TAFE/University with a link to the survey. The email would act as a Letter of Authority and should be sent by the Commissioner to give the survey legitimacy and encourage participation. A letter will be mailed beforehand too. Reference could also be made to the AIBS for members approached.

Introduction – to be displayed on the opening page of the survey

Welcome to the 2013 Building Commission *Survey on Building Surveying*.

The Building Commission (which will become the Victorian Building Authority) with the support of the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS) is keen to obtain feedback from current, past and potential building surveyors in Victoria about their views of the profession included aspirations and desires relating to this career choice.

The views of building inspectors and students (about building surveying) are also of interest to us.

Your input will assist the Building Commission and AIBS to better understand the needs and concerns of building surveyors in Victoria and guide the design of services, programs and activities to assist them professionally.

The survey is confidential and should take around 15 minutes to complete. Please be assured that all the information and opinions you provide will be used only for research purposes and we abide by the principles of the Privacy Act.

An independent market research company, Di Marzio Research has been engaged to assist with this research. If you would like to verify Di Marzio Research you can call the Australian Market & Social Research Society Survey Line on 1300 364 830.

It is possible that some of you will have received two invitations to participate in this survey because you are listed on more than one of the databases used. We can only apologise if this is the case and would ask that you simply delete one of the two invitation emails you received on this survey.

Please click next to begin the survey.

We'd like to start with some questions about **you and your work-related position**.

Q1a Firstly were you an employee of the Building Commission? Yes.....1
No.....2

Q1b And which of the groups shown best describes you? (*Multiples allowed*)

NOTE: SOME MIGHT BE A QUALIFIED BUILDING INSPECTOR (BI) AND STUDYING BS FULL OR PART-TIME BUT THEY WERE PRIMARILY A BI FOR THIS SURVEY.

Q2 I am a qualified building surveyor 1
Q4 I am a qualified building inspector 2
I am studying building surveying on a full-time basis 3
I am studying building surveying on a part-time basis..... 4
None of the above..... 5
CLOSE

IF CODE 1 IN Q1, ASK Q2a/b, OTHERWISE IF CODES 2/3/4 IN Q1 GO TO Q4.

Q2a.	How long ago did you become qualified as a building surveyor? Was it...	In 2011 or 2012	1
		Between 2000 & 2010.....	2
		Between 1995 & 1999.....	3
		Before 1995	4

Q2b.	And are you registered as a building surveyor with the Building Practitioners Board?	Yes	1
		No	2

IF 'YES' (CODE 1 IN Q2b – A REGISTERED BS) ASK Q2C/D OTHERWISE GO TO Q2F

Q2c.	And are you registered on a limited or unlimited basis?	Limited registration	1
		Unlimited registration.....	2

Q2d.	And are you currently practising - i.e. have you issued permits (signed them off) within the last 3 years, or been working as a Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS)?	Yes.....	1
		No.....	2

IF 'YES' (CODE 1 IN Q2D) ASK Q2E OTHERWISE GO TO Q2F

Q2e.	And do you practice predominantly in the.....?	Private sector (as a PBS), or.....	1
		Municipal sector (as an MBS or staff member), or	2
		Across both sectors fairly evenly	3

CHECK Q2B AND Q2D – IF 'NO' TO Q2B OR Q2D ASK Q2F/G OTHERWISE GO TO Q2G:

Q2f.	Are you currently....?	A council employee working with or for an MBS.....	1
		A private sector employee working with or for a registered, practising PBS	2
		A consultant in the private and/or municipal sector	3
		An employee of a government or statutory body.....	4
		Other (<i>specify</i>)	5

Q2g.	Have you ever practiced or worked as any of the following before? (Multiples ok)	In the private sector as a PBS (signing off permits)1 In the municipal sector as an MBS or staff member signing off permits2 A council employee working with or for an MBS3 A private sector employee working with or for a registered practising PBS4 A consultant in the private and/or municipal sector5 An employee of a government or statutory body6 Other (than the above)7
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IF PRACTISING NOW ('YES' IN Q2d) GO TO Q5a.
IF 'NO' IN Q2d AND CODES 1/2 IN Q2G ASK Q2H/I/J
IF 'NO' IN Q2d AND CODES 3-7 IN Q2G GO TO Q2J

Q2h.	And when did you stop practising as a building surveyor? (By practising here we mean signing off permits or working as an MBS). Did you stop doing this ...?	In the last year1 2-3 years ago2 4-5 years ago3 Over 5 years ago4
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Q2i. What are the main reasons why you do not practise as a building surveyor nowadays (ie no longer sign off permits or continue working as an MBS)?

.....

.....

Q4a. In the foreseeable future do you intend to become (or remain)...?	Registered and predominantly practice as a PBS issuing permits (sign them off).....	1
	Registered and practice as an MBS.....	2
	Registered and practice as a building surveying consultant in both sectors, or.....	3
	Registered as a building surveyor but not practice, or	4
	Registered and work as a building inspector only (not as a building surveyor), or	5
	Remain working as a building inspector	6
	Or, do something other than the above (<i>specify</i>).....	7
	Unsure.....	8

IF REGISTERED AND NOT PRACTISING (CODE 2 IN Q2d) OR IF CODES 1/2/3 IN Q4a GO TO Q7 INSTRUCTION, OTHERWISE IF CODES 4/5/6/7 IN Q4a ASK Q4b

Q4b. What are the main reasons why you yourself do not intend to practice as a building surveyor, or are unsure about practising as a building surveyor?

IF CODES 2, 3 OR 4 IN Q1 (BIs and those not yet qualified) ASK:

Q4C. Which, if any, of the following do you believe are major impediments to becoming a qualified, registered building surveyor in Victoria ...?	None/No major impediments.....	1
	Lack of courses in convenient enough locations	2
	Courses are not delivered in a way that suits your needs.....	3
	The course workload for the degree qualification is too high.....	4
	The industry is not welcoming to individuals wanting to enter it	5
	The industry does not provide enough work experience opportunities for individuals wanting to enter it.....	6
	There are not enough employment opportunities for building surveyors	7
	It is more attractive to work as a building inspector	8
	Building surveyors have a lot of responsibility under the Act.....	9
	Other (<i>specify</i>)	10
Unsure.....	D	

NOTE: THOSE WHO ANSWERED Q4b/c NOW GO TO Q8

IF ANSWERED Q2E (now practising in private or municipal sector) ASK Q5a:

Q5a. And, under your own registration, how many building permits, if any would you, **yourself**, have issued in the past 12 months?

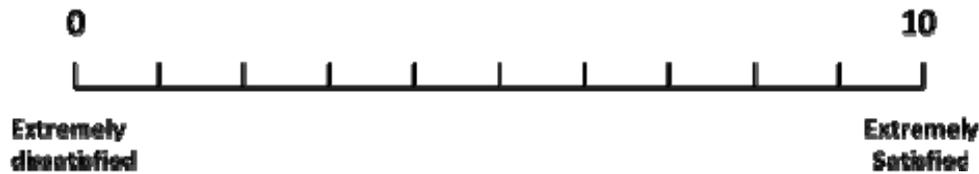
None, I don't issue permits 1
 Up to 90 in the last year 2
 90 to 420 in the last year 3
 Over 420 in the last year 4
 Unsure D

IF CODES 2/3/4/D IN Q5a, ASK Q5b OTHERWISE GO TO Q5c:

Q5b. Do you conduct all or most of the building inspections needed for your permit applications or do others assist you by undertaking inspections for you?

I conduct all or most of the inspections..... 1
 Others assist me by conducting inspections 2
 Other (*specify*)..... 3

Q5c. Thinking about the work you do now, how would you rate your job satisfaction overall in the using a scale of zero to ten where zero means extremely dissatisfied and ten means extremely satisfied?



Q5d. And over the last two years has your level of job satisfaction increased, decreased or not changed?

Increased.....1
 Decreased2
 Not changed.....3

Q5e. In the next 2-5 years do you expect or intend to...?

Continue practising as a building surveyor, or1
 No longer practice as a building surveyor and seek a different role or career path, or2
 Retire3
 Can't say D

IF CODE 2 IN Q5e ASK Q5f

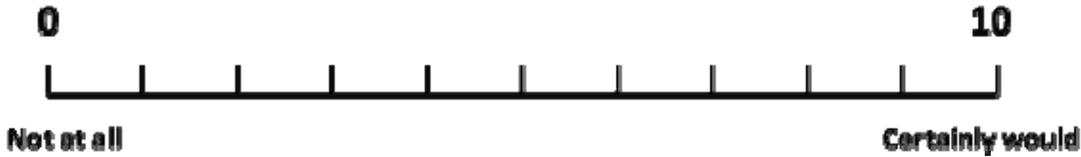
Q5e. What are the main reasons why you expect to seek a different role and no longer practise as a building surveyor?

IF CODE 1 OR 3 IN Q2E (now practising in private sector) ASK Q6:

Q6 In total, including yourself, how many practising building surveyors are there where you work?	One	1
	Two	2
	3-5.....	3
	6-10.....	4
	11-19.....	5
	20 plus	6

CONTINUE HERE WITH ALL QUALIFIED BSs, OTHERS GO TO Q8

Q7. How likely would you be to recommend building surveying as a career to young people these days? Please use a scale of zero to ten where zero means 'not at all' and ten means you 'certainly would'?



Don't knowD

ASK ALL

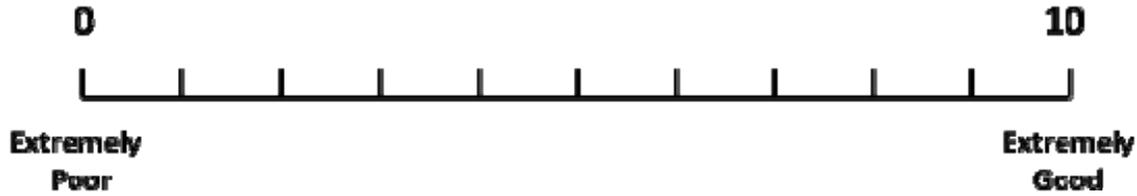
Q8. Here we present some statements made by others about the industry and profession in Victoria on which we'd like your opinion. Even if you are not a Building Surveyor, based on your experience and/or impressions please indicate whether you agree or disagree either strongly or a little with the following statements.
(ROTATE ORDER)

	Agree Strongly	Agree a little	Neither/ Nor	Disagree a little	Disagree strongly	Don't Know	Not Applic
A) The building surveying profession is appealing to potential entrants.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
B) Newly qualified building surveyors are well prepared for practice by the educational institutions.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
C) Building surveyors have too much responsibility under the Act.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
D) Building regulations have become too complex to interpret for compliance with confidence.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
E) The qualification for building surveying should only be a university degree not a TAFE diploma.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
F) The role of the building surveyor is not well enough understood or respected by those who need to appoint one.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
G) The accountability and potential liabilities now faced make you seriously question whether it is worth being a building surveyor.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
H) There is not enough financial reward for the risks and pressures faced by building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
I) Competitive pressures are contributing to a drop in quality standards being met by building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
J) It is a challenge for building surveyors to charge proper fees for service and carry out their responsibilities under the Act without compromise.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
K) Because building surveyors tend to carry insurance for 10 years they become easy targets for lawyers if a problem arises with a building even if other parties are more likely to be at fault.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
L) Builders should not be allowed to appoint building surveyors on behalf of their client the building owner.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N

M) Councils should not be allowed to issue permits and also play a policing enforcement role because that is a conflict of interest.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
N) I take pride in being a Building Surveyor	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
O) Undercutting of prices is not a real issue in our industry	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
P) All trades involved in building should have to be registered and carry the same type of insurance cover as building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
Q) I struggle to achieve the work/life balance that I want to have.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
R) The system encourages more of an adversarial than co-operative relationship between private and municipal building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
S) There are enough training, education and professional development opportunities on offer to building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
T) I take pride in being a building inspector	1	2	3	4	5	D	N
U) Being a building surveyor these days is a very stressful job	1	2	3	4	5	D	N

CHECK Q1A – IF ‘YES’ (CODE 1) THERE SKIP Q9, Q10 AND Q11 INSTEAD GO TO Q12

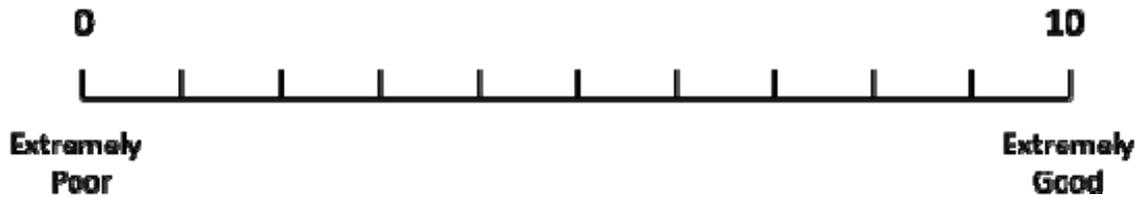
Q9 Still based on your experience and/or impressions, and even if you are not a building surveyor, how would you say the Building Commission’s reputation is rated **among building surveyors in Victoria**? Please use a scale of zero to ten where zero means ‘extremely poor’ and ten means ‘extremely good?’



Don't knowD

Q10. Also based on your experience and/or impressions, we'd now like you to rate the **Building Commission** on a number of specific dimensions using the same scale of zero to ten where zero means 'extremely poor' and ten means 'extremely good? Even if you were not a building surveyor we are interested in your views here. *(ROTATE ORDER)*

- A. The technical advice support service it provides for building surveyors.
- B. Providing guidance and direction for building surveyors to assist them in carrying out their role.
- C. Giving due recognition to building surveyors who deserve it.
- D. For the training, education and professional development opportunities it offers to building surveyors.



Don't knowD

Q11. Here we present some statements made by others about the Building Commission on which we'd like your opinion. Based on your experience and/or impressions please indicate whether you agree or disagree either strongly or a little with the following statements.
(ROTATE ORDER)

	Agree Strongly	Agree a little	Neither/ Nor	Disagree a little	Disagree strongly	Don't Know
A) The Commission is severely understaffed in its technical advice division.	1	2	3	4	5	D
B) Building surveyors receive only negative attention from the Commission.	1	2	3	4	5	D
C) The Commission's suggestion of introducing a demerits point system is a step in the right direction.	1	2	3	4	5	D
D) Continued registration of building surveyors should be linked with CPD that they undertake each year.	1	2	3	4	5	D
E) I'd welcome a newsletter from the Commission that is specific to the information needs and desires of building surveyors and building inspectors.	1	2	3	4	5	D
F) The Commission pays too much attention to minor rather than major transgressions by building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D
G) The Commission should try to guide and help building surveyors to work through problems it finds with their work before punishing them.	1	2	3	4	5	D
H) The Commission is too focused on collecting levies via building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D
I) The Commission should do more to promote the importance and role of building surveyors.	1	2	3	4	5	D
J) The Commission has the long term future of the building surveying industry at heart.	1	2	3	4	5	D
K) I'd like to see the Commission introduce an annual award specifically for building surveyors	1	2	3	4	5	D
L) I would like the Commission's role as industry regulator to be made clearer than it is now	1	2	3	4	5	D

ASK ALL

Q12	Are you a current or past member of the AIBS (Australian Institute of Building Surveyors)?	Yes current member	1
		Past member.....	2
		No, neither current nor past member.....	3

ASK ALL

Q13	Are you a current or past member of the RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors)?	Yes current member	1
		Past member.....	2
		No, neither current nor past member.....	3

Q14. What comments, if any, would you like to add here to do with building surveying in Victoria?

CLASSIFICATION QUESTIONS:

Thank you — now we'd like to finish off with some questions about you so we can analyse the responses to this survey by different types of people.

A. <u>Gender:</u>	Male.....	1
	Female	2

B. <u>Age:</u>	Under 30	01
Are you aged...?	30 – 34	02
	35 – 39	03
	40 – 49	04
	50 – 54	05
	55 - 59	06
	60 plus.....	07
	Prefer not to say	R

C. <u>Years in industry:</u>	Not involved in it professionally	1
How long have you been professionally involved in the building industry?	2 years or less	2
	3 – 5 years	3
	6 – 10 years	4
	11 – 15 years	5
	16 – 20 years	6
	For more than 20 years.....	7

D. <u>Education:</u>	Post-graduate University degree	1
What is the highest level of education you have completed to date?	Undergraduate University degree.....	2
	Diploma or Advanced Diploma (e.g. TAFE Course)	3
	Trade Certificate.....	4
	Other (<i>please specify</i>).....	5

NOTE: IF 'NOT IN WORK' eg FULL-TIME STUDENT GO TO K

E.	<u>Work Location:</u>	
	Is your work office located in...?	
		The CBD 1
		A suburban location..... 2
		A regional centre 3
		A rural location 4
		Elsewhere 5

F.	<u>Work Projects Location:</u>	
	Where are most of your building projects?	
		Inner Melbourne1
		Outer Melbourne2
		In Regional/Rural Victoria3
		Even mix of Melbourne and Regional/Rural Victoria4
		Elsewhere.....5
		Not Applicable.....NA

CHECK Q2b, IF CODES 1,2 OR 4, ASK G OTHERWISE GO TO K

<p>G. <u>Position at work:</u> At your work, are you?</p>	<p>The Owner or Part Owner of the business 1 A Senior Manager 2 A Manager..... 3 An Employee 4 Other (<i>please specify</i>) 5</p>
<hr/>	
<p>H. <u>Work Hours:</u> On average, how many hours would you work per week?</p>	<p>Up to 30 hours1 31-40.....2 41-50.....3 51-60.....4 Over 60 hours.....5 Varies a lot.....6</p>
<p>I. <u>Annual Leave:</u> In recent years how many weeks of annual leave have you taken...?</p>	<p>4 weeks or more per year 1 About 3 weeks per year 2 About 2 weeks per year 3 About one week per year 4 Less than one week per year 5 None 6</p>
<hr/>	
<p>J. <u>Income:</u> In which of these groups would your annual gross income fall?</p>	<p>Under \$30,000 pa 1 \$30,000 to \$50,000 pa..... 2 \$50,001 to \$75,000 pa..... 3 \$75,001 to \$100,000 pa..... 4 \$100,000 to \$200,000pa 5 Over \$200,000pa 6 Prefer not to say R Don't Know D</p>
<hr/>	

K. <u>Marital status:</u> Which of these categories best describes your marital status?	Single, never married	1
	A couple with no children	2
	A couple with children at home	3
	Single parent with children at home	4
	A couple whose children have left home.....	5
	Widowed	6
	Divorced / separated.....	7
Prefer not to say.....	R	

L. <u>Household size:</u> Including yourself, how many people live in your household?	One.....	1
	Two.....	2
	3-4	3
	5 plus.....	4

M. Do you have a Non-English speaking background?	Yes.....	1
	No.....	2

CONTINUE HERE WITH BS AND BI (CODES 1 OR 2 IN Q1). STUDENTS GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT

N. Do you use a computer in your job/role as a building surveyor or building inspector?	Yes	1
	No	2

IF 'YES' IN N, ASK O, OTHERWISE GO TO CLOSING SCRIPT

O. On average, for what proportion of your working day would you spend on a computer to keep track of or carry out your work?	Under 20%	1
	20% to 39%	2
	40% to 59%	3
	60% to 79%	4
	80% or more	5

P	Which, if any, of the following building surveying software packages do you use or have you used before?	XINFO..... 1
		Datapro/Intellisoft..... 2
		Munitech (Building Permit Manager)..... 3
		Civica 4
		Other (<i>please specify</i>)..... 5

CLOSING SCRIPT

That’s the end of the survey. As this is market research, it is carried out in compliance with the privacy act and the information you have provided will only be used for research purposes. Your details will not be attributed to your response in any way.

A summary of the findings from this research will be available on the Pulse website in due course.

We thank you for participating in our survey.

The Victorian Building Commission paid for this research which was completed by Di Marzio Research, 5 Jolen Court, Donvale.