

VBA hosts Rapid Industry Guidance service to keep industry safe and open

Keeping Victoria's building and construction industry safe and open during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is now even easier, with the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) hosting a dedicated call centre providing rapid guidance and information on occupational health and safety matters.

The Rapid Industry Guidance service is an initiative of the Victorian Government's COVID-19 Taskforce and provides a single point of contact for real-time information and advice tailored to the building and construction industry.

Workers, contractors, employers, industry associations and unions who call the Department of Health and Human Services' Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 and select Option 5 will be transferred to the VBA's specialist team where they can ask questions, clarify OHS matters and obtain expert advice on issues such as hygiene standards, physical distancing, screening of workers and the use of personnel hoists. On-site assistance may also be made available to address specific situations.

Any enquiries unable to be resolved immediately will be escalated to an Industry Liaison Officer appointed by the Department of Health and Human Services.

VBA Chief Executive Sue Eddy said ensuring the building and construction industry had access to reliable information would be critical to its success in navigating the challenges of operating during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Nothing is more important than the health and safety of Victorians. That's why the VBA is doing everything we can to ensure workplaces are kept safe and building sites remain open during the coronavirus pandemic," Ms Eddy said.

"Access to real-time advice and support through the coronavirus hotline will ensure the building and construction industry and the thousands of people it employs have access to information when they need it most while remaining safe at work."

The launch of the hotline follows the publication of the *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidelines for the Building and Construction Industry Victoria*. Now in their third revision, the guidelines are developed and endorsed by the state's building and construction unions, industry associations and government agencies.

Ms Eddy is one of several representatives appointed to the COVID-19 Taskforce. Other members include:

- Greg Stenton – Department of Health and Human Services
- Colin Radford – WorkSafe Victoria
- Matt O'Connor – Department of Premier and Cabinet; and
- Peter Parkinson – Victorian Building Industry Disputes Panel.

Industry consultant Michael Paynter has been appointed Industry Liaison Officer and will manage enquiries escalated by the VBA's call centre operators. He is joined on the Taskforce by Professor Malcolm Sim, an expert in occupational and environmental health from Monash University.

ENDS

Media Enquiries

Hugh McMaster, Acting Manager, Media – **Phone:** 03 9618 9316 **Email:** communications@vba.vic.gov.au

Web: vba.vic.gov.au **Twitter:** @VicBuilding **Instagram/Facebook/LinkedIn:** @VictorianBuildingAuthority