

# Media Release

May 8 2017

## Unregistered contractor convicted

An unregistered contractor who carried out a defect-ridden extension and renovation on a home in Sunshine West has been convicted and fined \$5000 in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria after an investigation by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA).

The Sunshine West contractor was paid more than \$70,000 for domestic building work in 2013/14 despite never being registered as a building practitioner with the VBA.

The building works included the construction of a 44-square metre extension to an existing home, the demolition of an existing study, the installation of a new skylight, shower room and pantry, and kitchen and bathroom renovations.

The unregistered contractor also demanded a further \$5861 to fix a list of defects including:

- A leaking skylight, causing damage to the ceiling;
- Missing bulkheads for the new cabinetry;
- Leaking shower head unit;
- Faulty installation of towel rails and toilet roll holders;
- Missing silicone sealant to many sections of both bathrooms;
- Leaking waste pipe from one vanity unit;
- Poor quality grouting in both bathrooms; and
- Installation of flood lights, rather than security lights.

The property owner lodged a complaint with the VBA which upon investigation led to a conviction in the Magistrates' Court of Victoria.

VBA Chief Executive Officer Prue Digby reminded home owners to ensure their builder was registered.

"It is not worth the money or heartache to risk using an unregistered building practitioner for your dream renovation or home," Ms Digby said.

"It takes less than five minutes to log on to the VBA's website, use the Find A Practitioner tool and ensure your builder or plumber is registered."

The charges included:

- Entering into a major domestic building contract without being registered as a building practitioner.
- Receiving a deposit of more than 5 per cent of the contract price for domestic building work where the contract price was more than \$20,000.
- Not producing a formal written contract for major domestic building works valued at more than \$5000.
- Carrying out domestic building work when not registered.
- Not being covered by required insurance when carrying out major domestic building work (because he was unregistered, he was unable to obtain the required insurance).

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