

Builder disqualified and penalised for wrongdoing

A Victorian builder who acted dishonestly and failed to obtain insurance has had his registration cancelled and been given penalties of more than \$30,000 in disciplinary action upheld by the [Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal \(VCAT\)](#).

Trent Valentine is now disqualified from practising for three years and has been penalised \$31,092 in action initiated by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and confirmed by VCAT, when it rejected his appeal.

VCAT accepted that Mr Valentine forged a certificate of insurance for work on a project at Ballantyne Street, Thornbury in 2019, unlawfully demanded \$192,500 from the building owner and then dealt with it dishonestly, and held himself or Spectre Group Pty Ltd out as being covered by the required insurance.

Spectre has since gone into liquidation, Mr Valentine's building registration has been cancelled and Mr Valentine has been disqualified from applying for registration in any category or class for three years.

The VBA's Director of Compliance and Enforcement, David Brockman, said this was a positive outcome for the reputation of the industry and safety of consumers.

"Mr Valentine behaved in a manner which was unprofessional and breached the trust of his clients. His conduct shows that he is unsuitable to practise as a builder in Victoria," Mr Brockman said.

"Not only did Mr Valentine not have insurance, he was not eligible to obtain it. Conduct such as this erodes the trust of Victorian consumers and the penalties confirmed by VCAT send a message that this will not be tolerated."

"Victorians should be able to count on practitioners to do the right thing. The behaviour of practitioners such as Mr Valentine brings the reputation of hard-working builders and plumbers into disrepute."

VCAT found that Mr Valentine's actions contravened both the *Building Act 1993* and the *Domestic Building and Contracts Act 1995*.

Victorians wanting to engage a builder or plumber can visit vba.vic.gov.au/find

The VBA has an online [consumer resource portal](#) with information for anyone who is experiencing issues with builders or plumbers.