

## Regulator holds building and plumbing practitioners to account

Building and plumbing practitioners breaking the rules were penalised almost a quarter of a million dollars by the state regulator in the last financial year.

Total penalties valued at \$226,550 were issued in 47 separate instances as a result of disciplinary action instigated by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) during FY2020-21.

The VBA conducted nearly 1200 building and plumbing investigations last financial year, resulting in 41 plumbing practitioners and 38 building practitioners being referred for prosecution.

In addition, the VBA has kept plumbers accountable by requiring them to return to site to rectify 1,080 instances of deficient plumbing work through the issue of rectification notices.

A critical enforcement action, a rectification notice gives plumbers 14 days to rectify their non-compliant work.

Of the 1798 building complaints received in the past 12 months, non-compliant building work was the most common, while of the 1721 plumbing complaints received, poor workmanship was the most prevalent complaint cause.

VBA Director Compliance and Enforcement David Brockman said the VBA adopts an evidence-based approach to its compliance and enforcement activity.

“The VBA complaints process may involve a number of steps and there are a range of outcomes possible if a breach or offence of building legislation is identified,” Mr Brockman said.

“We take into account the seriousness of any offences committed, the disciplinary history of the practitioner and the potential risk to life and property, among other factors, when undertaking enforcement action.”

A key function of the VBA is to supervise and monitor the conduct and ability of registered building and plumbing practitioners to practice, which helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of Victorians.

A VBA prosecution is a criminal proceeding and the ability to issue criminal charges is an important regulatory tool for the VBA.

Eleven practitioners had their registration suspended, 10 practitioners had their registration cancelled, conditions were placed on the registration of eight practitioners and five were disqualified due to disciplinary action in 2020-21.

“The vast majority of builders and plumbers in Victoria do the right thing but our investigators and inspectors work diligently to ensure that when rules are broken, practitioners are held to account,” Mr Brockman said.

The [Prosecution and Disciplinary Register](#) records disciplinary action taken against registered building industry professionals, building companies and plumbers in Victoria.

To find a registered or licensed building and plumbing practitioners in Victoria, visit [vba.vic.gov.au/find](http://vba.vic.gov.au/find)