



Media Release

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Research to tackle water damage in concrete balconies

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) continues to take proactive measures to tackle a problematic issue faced by apartment residents – water damage caused by moisture ingress in concrete balconies – by funding research by Swinburne University of Technology.

Led by Professor Shan Shanmugananthakumar and in collaboration with Housing Industry Association, the project aims to reduce the frequency of water-related defects encountered in concrete balconies in apartment buildings by identifying opportunities for improvement in concrete balcony design and construction practices, as well as regulatory standards.

The VBA's State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini said the regulator is supporting research that will find, or contribute to, new and innovative solutions that minimise moisture ingress and water damage.

"Water damage routinely tops the list of defects encountered in buildings and in complaints to the VBA," Mr Cialini said.

"Reducing the risk of moisture ingress and water damage in Victorian buildings through our regulatory activities is one of the VBA's focus areas. By improving building practices, we also aim to alleviate any health, amenity, and structural integrity impacts for all Victorians."

Research conducted by or supported by the VBA provides the evidence base to inform regulatory decisions and effect change in the regulatory system and to support an informed and thriving industry, with good practice and competent and skilled practitioners.

Professor Shanmugananthakumar said the research would identify opportunities to improve structural systems, methods of build, and the properties and performance of materials to limit balcony water ingress.

"This research intends not only to investigate building materials and methods, but also study waterproofing methods, to quantify their effectiveness using a whole-of-life investigation framework, which includes repair and replacement costs," Professor Shanmugananthakumar said.

The VBA recently held a [Practitioner Education Series webinar](#) for industry stakeholders on ways to combat water damage and indoor mould.

Through the [Research Grant Program](#), the VBA supports researchers at Australian universities and TAFEs find innovative solutions to challenges in the Victorian building and plumbing sector.

This grant was awarded under the second round of research grants funded by the VBA, with grants awarded to [RMIT University](#) and the [University of Sydney](#) this year.

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