



30 August 2019

Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria
Office of the Premier
1 Treasury Place
Melbourne VIC 3002

Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning
Level 16, 8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne Victoria, 3002

Dear Premier and Minister

RE: VICTORIAN BUILDING CONTROL & PERMIT SYSTEM SUBMISSION

I write on behalf of the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group (**VMBSG**). The VMBSG is an association committed to good building control and regulation at a local government level in Victoria. The VMBSG operates under its statement of purpose and the rules of the incorporated association. The purpose of this letter is to specifically address issues surrounding the current state of the Victorian Building Control and Building Permit system.

The Victorian Building Control and Building Permit system has been subject to severe and critical scrutiny in recent times for a range of reasons. The unfortunate combustible cladding crisis, which has been received considerable media coverage, has culminated in further highlighting the numerous shortcomings of the system.

We believe that it would be fair to say that public confidence in the system is now at an all-time low. Numerous inquiries and reports into the system over the years have identified serious systemic problems on multiple occasions and high-profile failures have received considerable public attention. Failures that in all too many cases will have catastrophic financial consequences for too many Victorian citizens. Numerous attempts over the years to tweak the legislation have been ineffective in arresting the ongoing systemic shortcomings and failures of the system.

VMBSG has long been sceptical of the privatised Building Permit system. It was always obvious to our members that the inbuilt conflicts of interests between builders and



developers and their building designers and private building surveyors would routinely deliver poor outcomes for the Victorian community. Obviously, as key players in the system, VMBSG members have done their best to support the system in an extraordinarily challenging environment. However the reputational damage that is inherent in the current state of affairs does tarnish the professional reputation of our members too.

It is now apparent to us that we have arrived at a point in time where avoidance of significant change is not an option. To this end, VMBSG have developed a submission to Government (attached) suggesting real improvements to the Victorian Building Control system that we believe will deliver better outcomes for the Victorian community. We trust that you will receive and review our submission documents with a view to real consideration for change.

The VMBSG looks forward to your response in relation to these matters. We would be pleased to provide any assistance in relation to further background and suggested system improvements wherever necessary.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

John Prendergast
President

Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group

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