



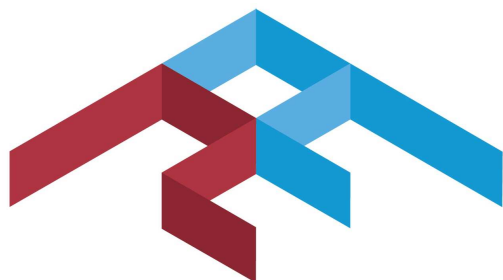
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PRO ACT. NEWS

October 2015

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The last ProAct News front page editorial lamented the lack of our replacements when we architects, builders, drafts people, tradespeople and indeed building surveyors retire. Yet at the same time, the nature of the work has elevated so that the old style “clerical officers” or “assistants” are not qualified, or even on the way to registration in order to do the work. Susie O’Brien in Heraldsun.com.au, 8 September raised the same point. “It’s not gen Y, it’s gen why. Why do they think trade apprentices are beneath them?”

She continues “jobs that a generation ago would have been eagerly snapped up are now not seen as good enough for this generation”.

I have witnessed what she describes – “youth unemployment rates rising.... but employees are often their own worst enemies – too expensive and too much aggro, aiming too high too fast, poor attitude and questionable commitment”.

Readers – your suggestions please. Let Ainslie or Drew know for the next newsletter.

OURS IS A VERY ATTRACTIVE PROFESSION..... Tell intending Recruits

The positives outweigh the negatives, please tell the boys and girls contemplating a building surveying career. This is despite the “societal shift” and less respect to authorities shown (to quote Municipal Building Surveyors group president Ashley Hansen in our last edition).

Last year Magistrate Rodney Crisp called for assaults on council inspectors to be treated the same way as assaults on police, echoing Whitehorse Councils call. Council’s proposed legislation would be similar to existing laws which punish people for offences against paramedics, police and emergency workers.

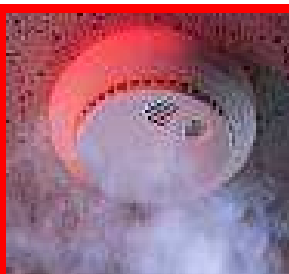
Readers – please support my championing the benefits of our profession to recruits.

The role is essential to the community – enhancing our built environment and

1. LIFE SAFETY

2. HEALTH

3. AMENITY



LIFE SAFETY

CSIRO Executive Director Dr. Anita Hill warned a senate committee investigating smoke alarms that alarms which have not been certified are being sold. She also said that anomalies in regulations meant that there was no guarantee that different types and brands could be interconnected and be networked effectively.

SAFETY

Children

As for “change your clocks, change your smoke alarm batteries” authorities are proposing “check your pool gate before daylight savings”. There are 1.2 million backyard pools around Australia. Plus as ABC TV said all the blow-up pools which they urge be emptied every night. Kidsafe Victorias Robert Caulfield, (and our Architect mate) urged compliance for safety.

Kidsafe also raises D-I-Y and home improvements:

- Noisy power tools which damage hearing;
- Unplug power tools;
- Pack up and clear debris;
- Kids wear shoes;
- Dangerous fumes;
- Asbestos.



HEALTH

Kitchens for food, laundries/water closets/bathrooms for bodily cleanliness, ceiling heights for air volumes to breathe, head heights on stairs to prevent concussion if hit, and sufficient light and ventilation through windows, doors and skylights.

Health underpins the building regulations, and updated standards for plumbing and drainage came into effect on 1 July 2015 to replace 2003 regulations.

AMENITY

Amenity is hard to quantify, but comes to the fore when inspecting the booming rooming house environment - and the companion *overseas student* housing.

Rooming houses were spartan during and after the second world war when the modern regulations were written.

Obviously minimum requirements for safety and security, including proper locks, adequate lighting, fire alarm and evacuation still apply.

Now Consumer Affairs Minister Jane Garret has announced a “fit and proper person test for people who operate rooming houses” .

The idea of such a test was a recommendation by the Coroner after a 2006 inquest into the death of trapped young people in Brunswick. The Sunday Age enquiry said 10 years later, shonky operators continue to exploit, including disrespect for building regulations.

AMENITY CITY WIDE + AUSTRALIA WIDE

Labor promised a minister for cities, and the Prime Minister wants a new government agenda for our cities in co-operation with States, Local Governments and Urban Communities. So we now have a new Federal Minister for Cities and the Built environment.

Planning Institute of Australian said on 21 September PIA applauds the commitment of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to the future of Australia's cities with this appointment of the Honourable Jamie Briggs MP.

AMENITY QUANTIFIED

- **Average floor space of a new Australian home in 1985 162m².**
- **In 2015 241m².**
- **In 2016 Victoria will build 33,000 multi unit dwellings (with gyms, pools, trendy cafe strips) compared to the lesser 32000 detached houses.**

A REGULATION CLARIFIES AND INVOLVES SAFETY, HEALTH AND AMENITY

An unroofed deck is not considered an unroofed terrace, and is therefore not permitted as an allowable encroachment into the 900mm setback to prevent the spread of fire to adjoining properties. (VBA "minimum setback for decks information sheet". Part 3.7 of NCC Vol Two).

INSPECTING DRUG LAB HOUSES

VICTORIA POLICE HAVE REPORTED A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN MARIJUANA BEING GROWN IN HOUSES. TWO SUCH HOUSES ARE LOCATED EACH WEEK, AND WHITTLESEA CIU DETECTIVE SGT ADRIAN BRILLIANT ESTIMATED TWO PERCENT OF ALL PROPERTIES COULD CONTAIN A CANNABIS CROP. HE SAID SUCH CAUSES \$25000 DAMAGE TO PROPERTIES. CUTTING HOLES IN ROOFS, FLOORS. 1000 WATT GLOBES WHICH CATCH FIRE, AND CHEMICALS WHICH IRREPARABLY DAMAGE FLOORBOARDS.

LANDLORDS ARE URGED TO CONDUCT ADDITIONAL INFORMED INSPECTIONS.

FROGISMS – Can only jump forward.

Leap into the world of Frogs – not only at the Leap Frog Melbourne Zoo display, not only as ProActs brand, but elsewhere.

- Mass extinction on cards as "everything gets worse for frogs" (Age 6/10/15)
- Scott Morrison*Leapfrogs* to the key position of Treasurer (Herald Sun)
- John Boehner, US Speaker of the House of Representatives is quitting, saying that keeping his conservatives in order was like pushing *a load of frogs in a wheelbarrow*.
- New company chairman Michael Smith taking over "you've had a bit of *boiling a frog*".
- See ProAct Building Surveyors on facebook for more eg, Frog gum boots

FEEDBACK Vin.O'Brien@knox.vic.gov.au

Drew,

Re the VAGO report I do not support the comments in the Report that state a building surveyor monitors the building process from start to finish. Obviously that is not our job. It is a serious concern to me that any notion that this was correct could form the basis of any new legislation.

Also I note with dismay that the Auditor general believes the Council is responsible for enforcement of safety and building standards and the Regulations for **both** municipal and private surveyors. Obviously incorrect. Again a concern if it is used to change legislation.

Unfortunately this report did not at any time interview any Building Surveyors, the MAV or any Council officer.

The report is highly critical of Surveyors without an understanding of the role of the Surveyor.

Unfortunately this report falls into the same traps that previous reports have in that it ostensibly supports the VBA in dealing with the very issues the VBA created by giving it more authority. The letter from the AIBS which details solutions that strip the VBA of

PROACT HAS TWO FRONT DOORS

The newest door is the almost 100% used electronic entry. The traditional front door is also very welcoming.

YOU CANT BLAME COUNCILS FOR SAYING "NO"!

Jeparit home burnt to charred remains. Legitimate council demolition order. Financial hardship. Homeless. Depression, anxiety made worse. Seemingly all are losers, and a destitute family distraught.

A man who plummeted down a waterfall in a public park has blamed the park owner for making the waterfall look active and adventurous thus so attractive to adventurous people like him.

LIVING IN THE COUNTRY / CITYFRINGES

Planning Minister Richard Wynne reversed a country council decision. City bred "tree changers" moved next to a farm and objected to farm smells, noises, and farmyard activities. The farm is allowed to continue.

Meanwhile the Minister is watching the influx of 145000 new residents into Wyndham, Casey, Whittlesea and Melton. He says living on the city fringes must not be a disadvantage. He was speaking at the 8 million Melburnians Conference.

WHERE IS THE RELATIVITY? BUILDING BECOMING UNAFFORDABLE.

Says the MBAV "all we want to do is be productive". Victorian construction workers are said to have received 27% more than average workers in the last 15 years.

What Victorians get paid

Industry	Annual salary
Doctor	\$165,329
Carpenter	\$141,224
Unskilled construction	
Labourer	\$130,859
Tertiary education	
Teachers	\$97,718
Financial brokers & dealers,	
Investment advisers	\$96,127
Engineers	\$93,673
Business and systems analysts,	
And programmers	\$93,423
Defence force members, fire	
Fighters and police	\$91,021

Deloitte Access Economics December 2014. 2012

CRYSTAL BALL

Real Estate agents will be under the spotlight after the August announcement of a "sweeping" review of :

- Agents
- Conveyancing
- Powers and functions of owners corporations, licensed estate agents and land transactions. Make your submission to Consumer Affairs Victoria.

HOW CLIMATE CHANGE WILL TRANSFORM YOUR HOME

Whitegoods

Within 20 years, fridges will monitor everything they store and warn you when items are nearing use-by dates. They could draft shopping lists. If there is an outage, their built-in "coolth" storage will keep food cold.

Windows

US researchers have developed a transparent solar panel, meaning that windows will generate electricity. The panel uses organic salts that absorb ultraviolet and infrared light. The salts glow at another infrared wavelength, which is guided to the edge of the panel, where strips of conventional photovoltaic cells convert it into electricity.

Food appliance

Kitchens will have appliances such as the Food Cycler, a countertop composter that turns food scraps into odourless compost in three hours. At present, less than 5 per cent of the more than 30 million tonnes of organic waste that enters landfill each year gets recycled.

Walls

Homes will be built with a combination of wall types. Some houses use a combination of reverse brick veneer and double-brick walling to boost internal thermal mass where needed. There will be timber-framed walling, which has a lower carbon footprint. In other areas.

Energy monitor

CSIRO-developed technology called Eddy will allow home owners to track energy usage in real time and remotely switch on and off pool pumps, A/C etc via digital devices.

Roof

UTS researchers have developed a "cool roof", consisting of polyesters on a silver layer, that remain up to 11 degrees cooler than the ambient air temperature, even under summer sun. It could reduce the heat island effect of urban areas and cut power demand from air conditioning.

Heating/cooling

Air conditioners could be the solution to, rather than a cause of, blackouts during intense heatwaves. ANU engineers have invented a solar-powered air conditioner that can cool in summer, warm up in winter, and deliver solar hot water all year round.

Fire Warning

If Tasmania has already declared a Total Fire Ban Day, don't be complacent in Victoria. Our state is only a few hours off being tinder dry.

To permit holders in high BAL areas, put your Bush Fire plans into place immediately. To others – make your yards of ember debris, and restack fire wood etc well clear of the house.

Credit

Climate for Change, June 24, 2015

TRAPS FOR YOUNG REGISTERED PRACTITIONERS

Young MD of Designers conducted site insp. Did not recognize slab lid of old style septic tank.

+

Drawn up by even younger draftsman. No icon for osst

+

Young reviewing Building Surveyor examines specific portions of plans lodged on line.

=

Young builder pumped it empty – it promptly refilled. Built timber floor over. *Sub floor “pond” rapidly*

HINTS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS

Minimising foundation movement – information sheet has been released by the VBA. It is terrific. We put one in with every dwelling permit.

It has been designed for builders to give to home owners at the handover stage. It also tells how poor maintenance and landscaping can impact and lead to building damage.

Happy Birthday Building Regulations

Like “Life begins at 40!”, the Building Regulations soon have a significant birthday. And they sunset.

Looking on the horizon for the replacement regulations, they now look to contain

- Waterproofers regulations and training.
- Return to waterproofing Inspections (after a 20 year break)
- Possibly even storm water drain inspections

This newsletter will try hard to keep readers up to date.

NEW DEPUTY CHIEF COMMISSIONER

Former Labor planning minister architect Justin Madden has been appointed Deputy Chief Commissioner of the Victorian Building Authority.

CHARITIES BENEFIT

ProAct has its favourite charities both here and in a third world developing country. If you attend a family-friendly event, and there is frog evidence, odds-on we were the sponsor. Please support.

Thank you to those who would like to save the planet and have this Pro Act News emailed.

If any others would also, kindly please forward your email address to dwadsworth@optusnet.com.au with the subject line of “Pro Act News Subscribe Me”. We would only be too happy to oblige, as we will again keep in touch with urgent developments.

If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please reply to this email with a subject line of “Pro Act News Unsubscribe Me”. Regardless, we sincerely hope that you remain with us.

Drew, Ainslie, Gaye and Di