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MEDIA RELEASE

HIA Supports Stakeholder Group on Cladding Review on High Rise Buildings

The Victorian Government announced today that it will establish an expert Taskforce to investigate and address non-compliant use of cladding on Victorian buildings.

Fiona Nield, HIA's Victorian Executive Director said that "HIA has been supporting our members to improve their awareness of the problems associated with product use and conformity of building products for some time."

"The Taskforce needs to focus on providing clear lines of responsibility and to ensure that builders are not the sole party responsible for checking product quality."

This Taskforce intends on establishing a Stakeholder Reference Group consisting of key industry organisations including HIA.

"HIA would be pleased to provide advice and input to this Group," said Ms Nield.

"In the wake of the London fire there have been calls to undertake audits of residential apartment buildings and other high risk buildings and HIA is aware that a number of states are also undertaking similar reviews now.

The decision by the Victorian Government follows a meeting of Building Ministers, held last Friday, where Ministers discussed potential actions to ensure the safety of buildings in Australia.

The Building Ministers have agreed to engage an expert to carry out a review of compliance and enforcement of Australia's building regulations.

"HIA is supportive of this decision by Ministers nationally as it may provide valuable insights into how the building approval process can be improved and look at the building approval system holistically."

Equally important was a decision by Ministers to expedite the actions already underway by the Australian Building Codes Board focused on fire safety in high rise buildings and on building products being used in accordance with the National Construction Code.

"Nationally we should be ensuring everyone in the building process interprets the code in the same way and that people checking information about building product conformance understand what to ask for when building with a particular product."

"HIA continues to support the actions agreed to by Ministers in 2016 as they remain the key steps to improving building safety in Australia and they should be progressed as quickly as possible."

For further information:

Fiona Nield	Executive Director, Victoria	0471 751 187
Kristin Brookfield	Chief Executive Industry Policy	0409 853 053