



*the voice of the industry*

28 April 2020

## **Keeping VCAT Moving is Vital to Home Building: HIA**

The Housing Industry Association (HIA) has welcomed today's announcement by the Attorney General that the Government intends to provide funding to support VCAT implement the digital upgrades necessary to operate under COVID-19 movement restrictions.

Work has already commenced and will continue on digital upgrades to ensure that VCAT matters will be able to be heard.

HIA's Victorian Executive Director, Fiona Nield said that this is good news for Victoria's home building industry.

"The Planning and Environment List, which includes many housing matters, has been largely on hold since March due to COVID-19 and was not expected to progress until 15 May.

"It is hoped that with these new measures in place there will be a range of ways that planning matters can be heard.

"Delays to the approvals process slow building activity so it is important that we keep moving with these cases and ensure we stabilise home building activity. It is vital at this time that work in the home building pipeline can progress in a timely way.

"HIA has been advocating for the Government to support VCAT to continue to progress cases in the current environment.

"In particular HIA has suggested all options need to be considered including 'on the papers' hearings and using appropriate technology where possible.

"This announcement indicates that a range of ways to proceed with cases will be introduced, using appropriate technology and potentially "on the papers hearings".

With new technology VCAT should be able to boost their services and utilise all of its sessional members to clear the backlog of cases that have been delayed during COVID-19.

"HIA has also been advocating to resolve building dispute matters currently held up in the Domestic Building Disputes Resolution Victoria process, by removing the need for mandatory conciliation. This would ensure matters can move through VCAT and would support today's announcement.

"HIA is once again pleased that VCAT will be provided with a way through for the home building industry and Victorians who want to move forward with their dream of home ownership" Ms Nield concluded.

**For further information please contact:  
Fiona Nield, Executive Director**

**0419 751 187**



**MEDIA RELEASE**