

MEDIA RELEASE



13 October 2020

Victorian Home Renovators Need Help: HIA

The Victorian Government must move to allow a return to work for renovation businesses, mostly small family run businesses, that have been unable to operate for many months now under Stage 4 restrictions.

“Business owners within the Victorian home renovation industry are crying out for help and feel largely forgotten during the Stage 4 lock downs,” Fiona Nield, HIA Executive Director, Victoria said today.

“For many renovators stage 4 restrictions has meant financial hardship and a complete halt to work. Thousands of these small businesses are suffering under the strain and there is currently no end in sight.

“While some parts of the home building industry have been able to continue under stage 4 restrictions, the impact has not been uniform. The area hardest hit by the ongoing lock down has been the renovations sector.

“The ban on renovation work has also caused many home owners to live with incomplete building work at their home as there was no time to complete works in progress included in the restrictions. Home owners may have been willing to accept unfinished work for six weeks, but now they appear likely to have to wait much longer before the work at their home can be completed as restrictions drag on indefinitely.

“HIA has provided a plan to Government for the safe resumption of renovations in occupied homes. The plan outlines the many safeguards the industry had already put in place and can continue to use to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 for trades and home owners alike.

“HIA calls on the State Government to provide certainty for the renovation industry and allow them to safely return to work in homes at the next stage of easing restrictions on 19 October.

“The renovation sector in Victoria generated around \$9.5 billion to the State’s economy annually over the last five years. Taking account of COVID-19 HIA had projected this to fall to around \$8.8 billion in 2020/21 before the restrictions were applied. The impact of these prolonged restrictions is likely to see this figure fall further.

MEDIA RELEASE



“Renovation builders and their customers have been left waiting for too long now for the State Government to let them know when renovation work can commence.

“The work banned includes not only work inside an occupied house but any building work on that land. It is not even possible to build a separate home, such as a granny flat, on land where an occupied separate house exists.

“The restart of landscaping and gardening work at occupied homes has been helpful, but it’s only a fraction of the activity that would normally be occurring.

“There is an opportunity to allow all other renovation work, such as kitchens, bathrooms, alterations and additions to recommence without compromising health and safety outcomes. The track record of residential builders, including renovation builders, prior to the Stage 4 restrictions, must be taken into account in considering how the potential risk from these activities was being well managed and will continue to be under altered restrictions.

“Renovators, their trades and home owners deserve more support and certainty from the Victorian Government. It is now time for the Government to give them this certainty and allow them to safely get back to work.”

Photo opportunity and subjects available on request.

For further information please contact Fiona Nield, Executive Director - Victoria 0419 751 187.