

MEDIA RELEASE

14 October 2020

JOINT STATEMENT FROM CFMEU AND MASTER BUILDERS VICTORIA

United call for changes from October 19

Master Builders Victoria and CFMEU today called on the State Government to ease some restrictions on small scale construction and renovations work from October 19.

A letter from Master Builders Victoria, the CFMEU, the Electrical Trades Union, Master Plumbers, National Electrical & Communications Association and the Plumbing and Pipe Traders Employee Unions was sent to the Premier and Ministers yesterday outlining suggestions for changes from Monday that still comply with the major safety principles.

Master Builders Victoria CEO Rebecca Casson said:

“We have seen some parts of the building and construction industry successfully get back to close to full capacity in the last few weeks in a COVIDSafe manner. We have been working tirelessly to support all of our members returning to work, and our industry’s safety record suggests that time is overdue.

“For decks, pools and other outdoor landscape constructions there is usually no requirement to enter a household, but these businesses are still being prevented from working. Permitting this work, whilst also increasing the number of persons permitted on small scale construction sites, is a sensible and safe way to get our industry and economy moving.”

John Setka from the CFMEU said:

“Large scale construction is back to 85% and we need to be back at 100% soon. Small-scale construction also needs to get back to increased capacity as soon as possible. We have continued to demonstrate our ability to work safely with minimal cases attributed to the construction industry, both small and large and are committed to working together to ensure the entire construction industry stays working and helps rebuild the Victorian economy.”

The group has called on the Government to consider the following:

1. Permitting small scale construction including renovation work, like major landscaping, decks or pools to open to full capacity and work in a COVIDSafe manner from 19 October 2020. If epidemiological data and health advice continues to limit this activity, we have asked the Government to consider allowing outdoor work and work on sites that are not occupied, and to increase the number of persons on small scale construction sites to enable the work pipeline to continue and ease a building backlog.
2. Allowing preliminary works required for the signing of contracts to be carried out on occupied homes where the owners are not on the premises.

3. Permitting shops/retail that support the building and construction industry to operate by appointment only, immediately. Examples of the types of products included are: stairs, carpets, bricks, tiling, kitchens, cabinetry, stone masons, flooring/concreting, glazing/splashbacks, door hardware, furniture, sanitaryware, roofing/roof tiles, render, plaster, blinds, appliances, hardware stores, plumbing/ENS, bathrooms, electrical fittings and accessories, paint, laminates and appliances.
4. Expand the Business Support Fund to include those building and construction businesses who are unable to work, or have had to limit their work, in the third round of funding support - as currently they are not eligible.

[For the full letter please see this link](#)

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