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VICTORIAN COMMISSIONER COULD HELP EASE COST/DELAY BURDENS FOR CROSS-BORDER BUILDERS

Key points:

- *Cross-border builders face huge burdens and inefficiencies in addressing jurisdictional red-tape and administrative bureaucracy.*
- *A cross-border commissioner would help facilitate communication, cut the red tape and relieve unnecessary cost and time burdens to an industry that contributes over 40 per cent to the Victorian economy.*

Master Builders applauds the Victorian government's recent commitment to develop the business case for a Cross-border Commissioner to help streamline business and commerce across the border with New South Wales.

"For a long time we have been calling for measures like this that help cut away the red tape entangling building and construction commerce between Victoria and New South Wales," Radley de Silva, CEO of Master Builders Association of Victoria, said.

"Red tape wastes time and money for the building and construction sector; the property industry already contributes more than 40 per cent to the Victorian economy-- imagine how much more would be delivered if the system were more efficient and effective," Mr de Silva said.

"Builders who live and practice in cross-border communities, such as Albury-Wodonga, operate with significant administrative disadvantages," Mr de Silva said. **"They are beholden to inconsistent rules and legislation for insurance, licensing and registration, and mutual recognition that straddle federal, state and local jurisdictions.** The success and efficiency of their work can hinge entirely on which side of the border their project and resources happen to be located."

"For example, applications for mandatory home warranty insurance must be made in each state. The cross-border builders, a large percentage of which are small mum-and-dad businesses, hold separate eligibilities and face different insurance thresholds, periods of cover and consumer payouts for projects that may, in fact, be only blocks apart. It places a huge burden on small operators," Mr de Silva said.

"A Cross-border Commissioner will be able to identify and act on areas of significant overlap, many of which can be achieved with simple communication between administrative offices," he said.

Media enquiries: Leanne Edwards, General Manager-Marketing, Policy & Communications, 0413 450 254, ledwards@mbav.com.au

Peter Sackett, Media Adviser, (03) 9411 4534, 0466 777 059, psackett@mbav.com.au

