

## UDIA Victoria Media Release

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### *Owners to pay for rectification of combustible cladding*

The Victorian Division of the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) has held an industry forum on cladding, highlighting the complications associated with determining who should bear the cost of rectifying buildings with combustible cladding.

The Co-Chair of the Victorian Cladding Taskforce Ted Baillieu said at the UDIA event that the issue of cladding demands an immediate response to ensure public safety. His recommendation is that the Victorian Government find the at-risk buildings and fix them within the confines of Victoria's existing financial and legal structure, which puts the onus on the property owner to pay for rectification.

According to the Victorian Cladding Taskforce, several factors have led to the widespread non-compliant use of cladding, which includes the supply and marketing of inappropriate building materials, variations and inconsistent interpretation of regulations and codes, competitive commercial pressures which incentivise shortcuts, inadequate enforcement, poor assurance mechanisms, and a general complacency or blind spot to risk by industry.

Given the wide range of contributing factors linked with the use of non-compliant combustible cladding, the UDIA forum sparked was much debate about who should pay to make at-risk buildings safe.

"The industry is facing a complex issue in having to assess compliance retrospectively against new clarifications and regulations," said Managing Director of Hickory Michael Argyrou.

"We look forward to the government showing leadership in assessing the problem and creating a solution that fairly and reasonably addresses the issue of who will pay to rectify non-compliant buildings," he said.

"The assertion that buildings are only being declared retrospectively non-compliant does not stack up against the evidence the VBA has gathered through its audit program," said CEO of the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) Sue Eddy.

The VBA started inspecting priority buildings before Christmas as part of their state-wide audit.

"Regardless of what materials are used on your building, now is a good time to review the fire safety features and procedures for your building," said Mr Baillieu at the UDIA forum.

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## **ABOUT: URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA**

The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) is a nationally recognised body that advocates for Australia's urban development industry. In Victoria, UDIA informs and engages government and industry members, enabling better policy and better business decisions. With a primary focus on the residential property sector, UDIA protects and promotes over 350 member companies across Victoria including developers and a range of other professionals involved in producing, financing and marketing residential property.

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