

PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS PROGRAM

Activity Report

FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23 Q1

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ABORIGINAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The VBA respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water upon which we rely. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life.

We embrace the spirit of reconciliation, working towards equality of outcomes and an equal voice.

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ABOUT



The VBA's Proactive Inspections Program (PIP) is an early-intervention regulatory initiative which aims to identify non-compliant building and plumbing work under construction and ensures the work is rectified. Our team includes experienced building inspectors, building surveyors and licensed plumbers, who typically inspect over 1,000 domestic and commercial sites each month. Inspections focus on either building or plumbing work and sites are chosen using a variety of methods. These include:

- **Random** - identification of building permits (lodged with the VBA) based on pre-defined risk-factors, (e.g. buildings intended for human occupation, buildings that are more than two storeys or costs of works etc.)
- **Intelligence based** - typically involves targeted inspections of practitioners or sites of interest (based on a variety of information, including risk data) and/or a class of builder/building surveyor.
- **Ad-hoc** - inspectors use flexibility to inspect sites that come to their attention while attending other pre-determined sites.

When our inspectors identify compliance risks (that is, potentially non-compliant building and plumbing work), they write to the practitioner, notifying them of the issues that need to be addressed. Once notified, the practitioner responsible (builder, plumber or building surveyor) must respond to the VBA within three days for serious issues and within 14 days for moderate or lesser risk. Critical life-safety issues must be addressed immediately and, in these cases, the VBA will telephone the practitioner and relevant building surveyor, as well as notifying co-regulatory agencies such as WorkSafe.

- In some circumstances, the VBA will issue a *Direction to Fix* to resolve the most critical issues. For example, where non-compliant wall cladding is identified, the VBA will issue a *Direction to Fix*, requiring the cladding's removal before an occupancy permit is granted.
- The VBA uses a risk-rating scale (Appendix 1) to determine the level of scrutiny applied to a potential issue. The scale considers the potential adverse effects on the future safety of building occupants and people nearby and on the amenity of the building itself.

1.1. MINISTER'S STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS

In line with the Minister's Statement of Expectations, our goal is to inspect 10 per cent of all building permits issued in Victoria each year. When selecting inspection sites, we analyse building permit data and consider a range of risk factors. We sometimes target certain types of construction to manage risk and ensure intervention at the earliest possible stage.

1.2. BENEFITS

PIP improves safety and compliance outcomes for building and plumbing work in Victoria through early identification and rectification and, in some cases, by taking other enforcement action. By inspecting work under construction, the VBA can address significant failures earlier, resulting in better outcomes for all involved. At the same time, rectification is often easier and less costly (and covered by practitioners, not the owner) and avoids impacts on the safety, health and amenity of future occupants if the compliance risk had remained undetected or unresolved.

Information and intelligence gathered through PIP enables the VBA to provide advice on building and plumbing standards and education and training in the industry.

1.3. HOW WE CONDUCT PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS

Building and plumbing inspectors are provided with comprehensive electronic inspection checklists. The checklists have more than 500 elements grouped into three parts that address:

- building and plumbing work broken down into different building stages under the National Construction Code – Volumes 1 and 2 (Building Code of Australia).
- mandatory requirements under the Building Act 1993, Building Regulations 2018 and Plumbing Regulations 2018.
- the display of permit information.
- occupational health and safety (OHS) elements such as working at heights, temporary fencing, adequacy of propping and bracing and working in trenches. If any OHS items present an unacceptable risk, the relevant co-regulators (Environment Protection Authority, WorkSafe or Energy Safe Victoria) are contacted immediately by the building or plumbing inspector.

A comprehensive outline of the electronic inspection checklists is detailed in Appendix 2.

FY22/23 Q1 PERFORMANCE

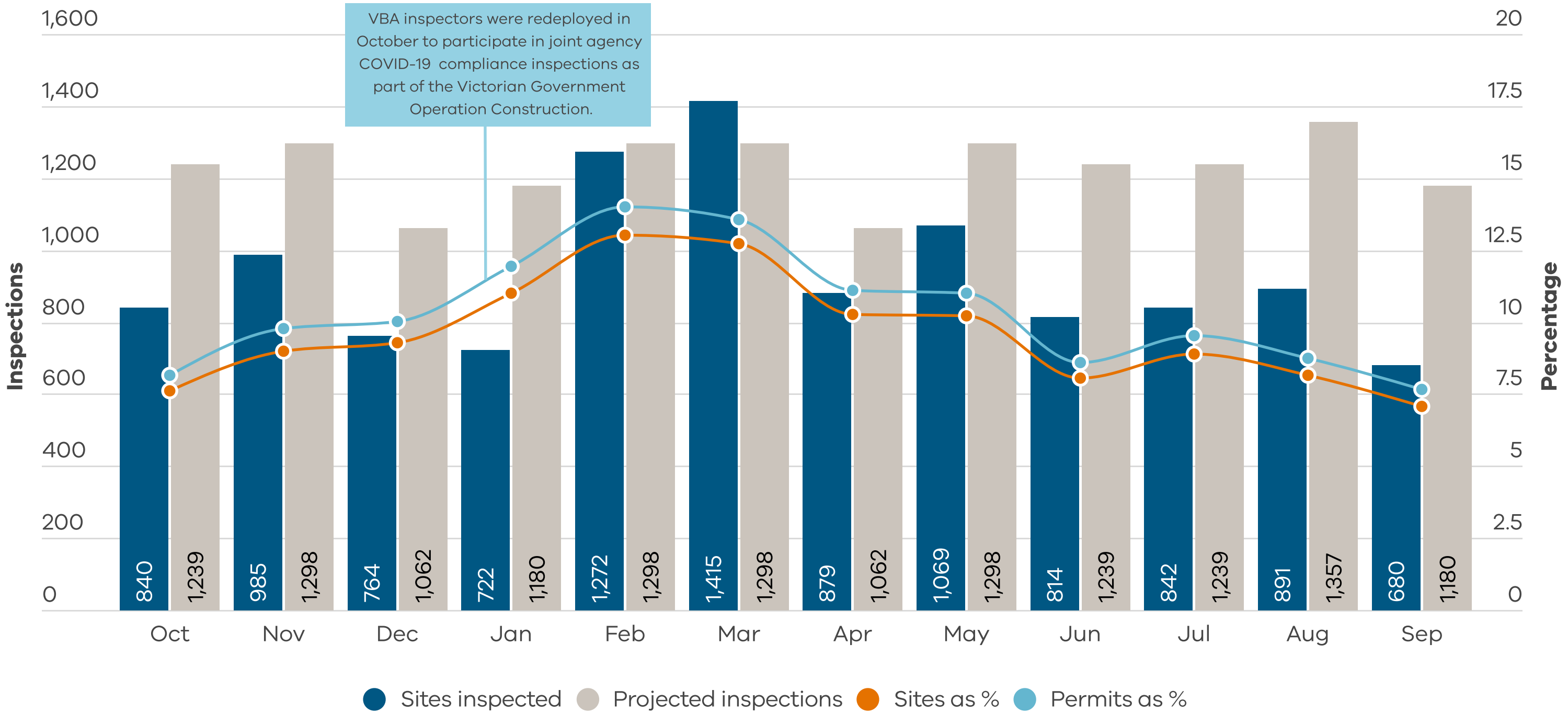


2.1. PERFORMANCE YEAR TO DATE

The graph below illustrates the number of sites inspected each month and demonstrates how the VBA is tracking against the Minister’s Statement of Expectations to inspect 10 percent of new building permits every year.

INSPECTIONS Q1 – JULY 2022 TO SEPT 2022

Projected inspections are based on a full financial year forecast of building permit activity across Victoria, as well as historic monthly building permit activity trends. Actual activity is reported from building permit levy data and may vary from projected totals. Discrepancies between projected and completed inspections may occur depending on unforeseen industry activity and resource allocation (e.g. COVID-19 restrictions).



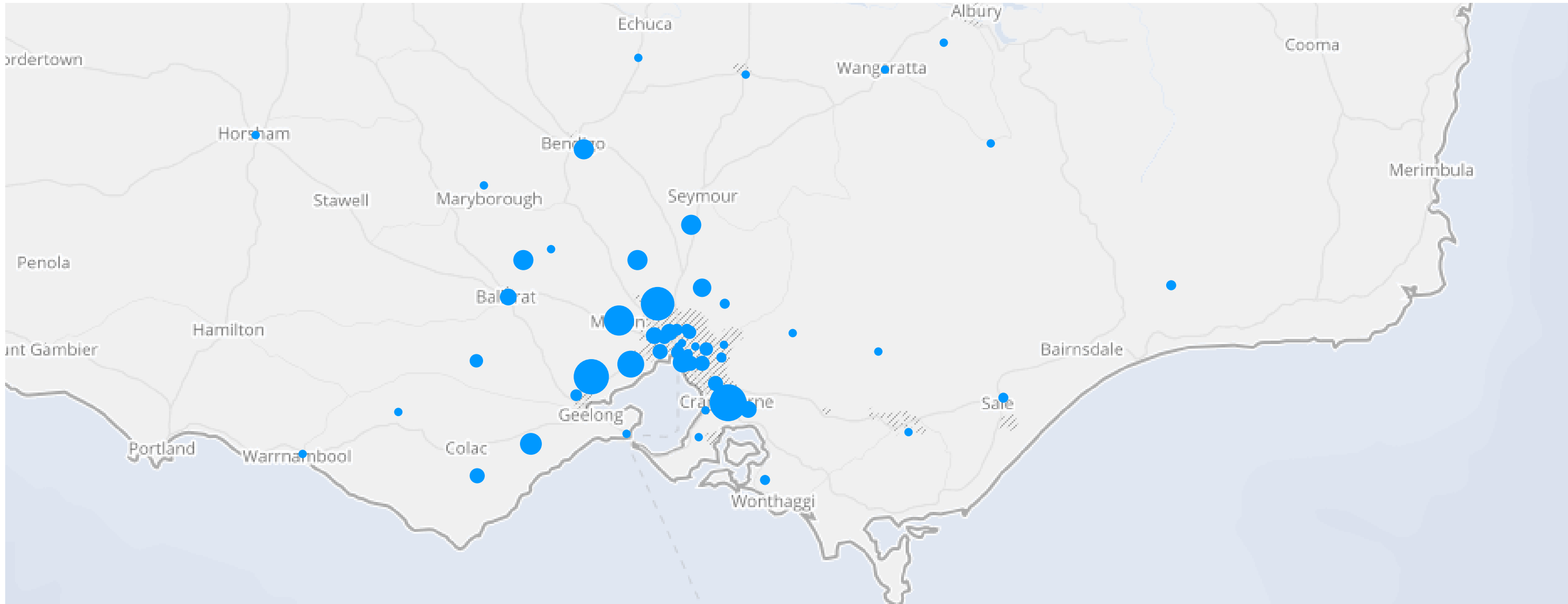
TOTAL INSPECTIONS – FY22/23 Q1



1,476
Building
Inspections

A total of 2,406 inspections (comprising 1,476 building and 930 plumbing inspections) were conducted across 58 municipalities in Victoria, involving 1,038 builders and 225 building surveyors.

INSPECTION MAP - FY22/23 Q1

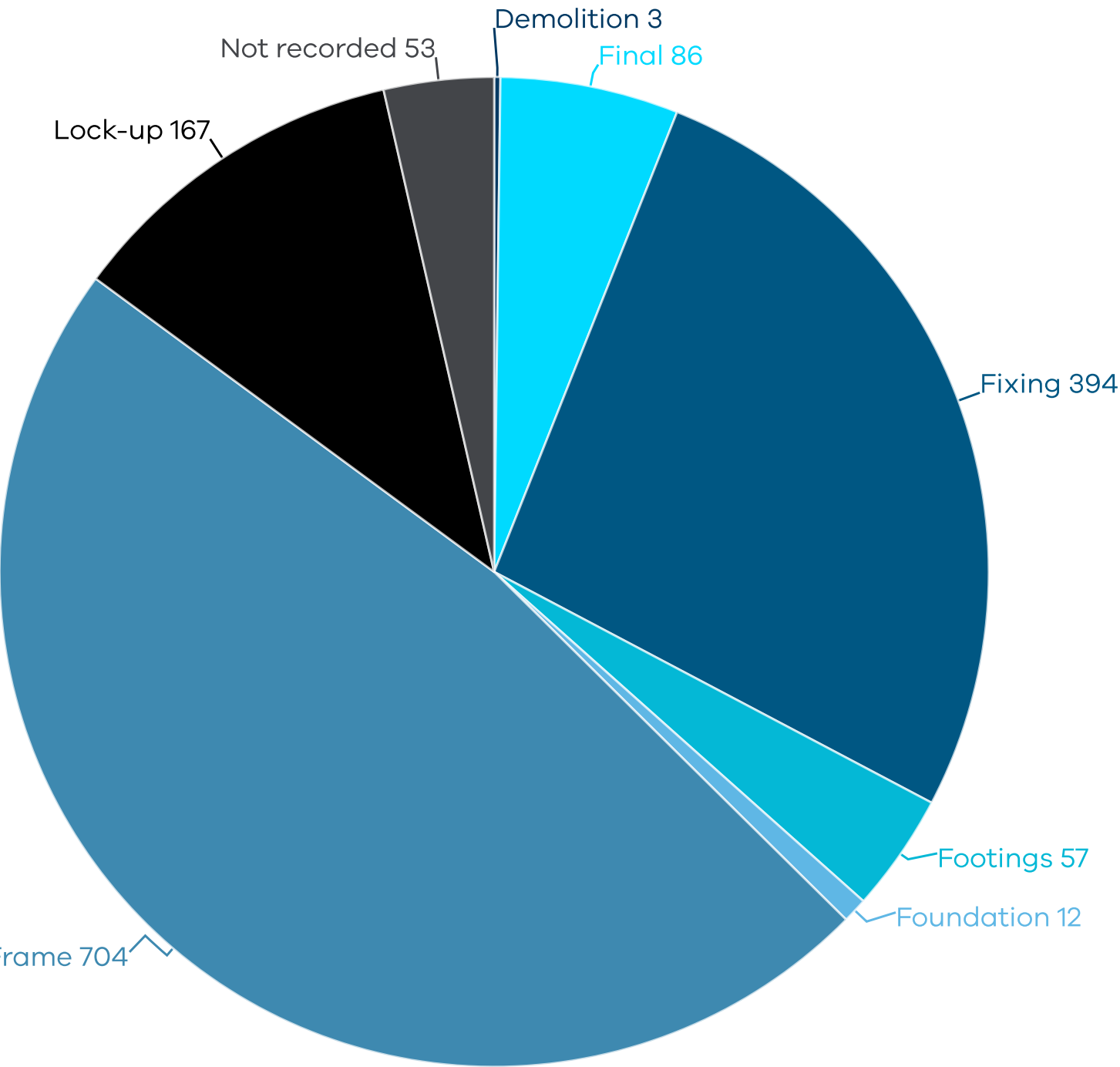


The dots represent the municipalities in which inspections occurred, the size of dots correlates to the number of inspections.
Visit the link to view the interactive map <https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/building/complaints-compliance-enforcement/proactive-inspections-program/quarterly-reports>

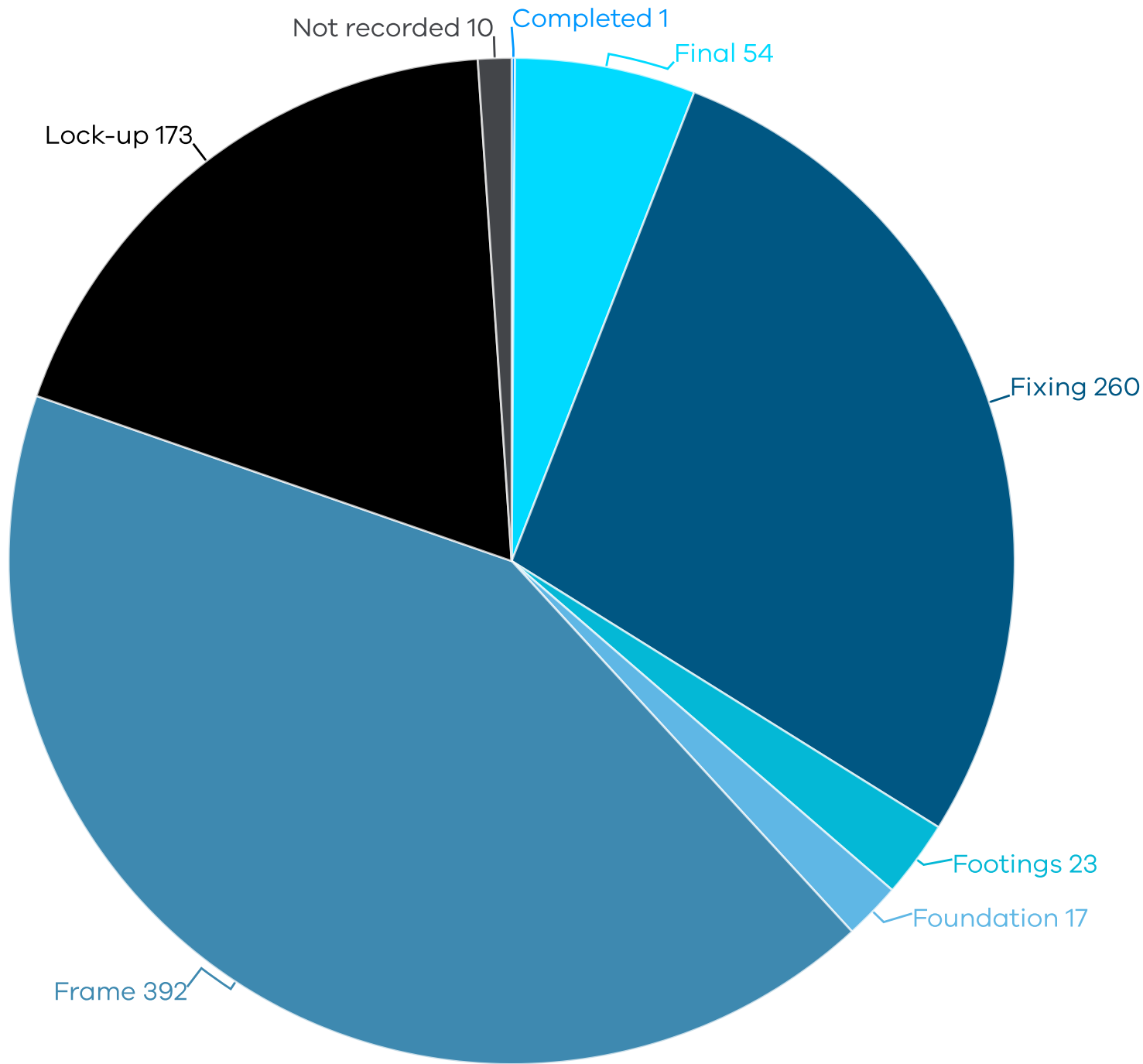
NUMBER OF INSPECTIONS AT CONSTRUCTION STAGE FY22/23 Q1

The graphs below illustrate the number of inspections per construction stage throughout the financial year.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS



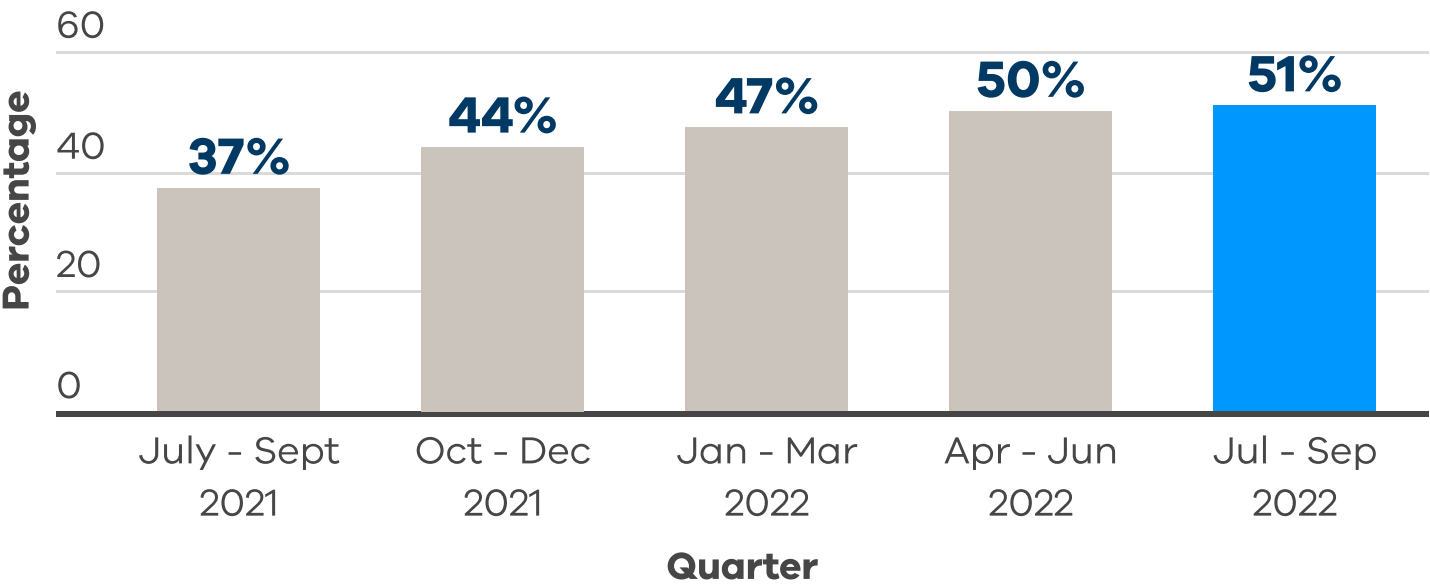
PLUMBING INSPECTIONS



2.2. WHAT WE FOUND

1,230 or 51% of inspections conducted during this quarter (July-Sept 2022) identified at least one compliance risk, a 1% increase from the previous quarter. Significant increases in compliance risks had been observed during the previous three quarters, which was a result of the VBA's strategy to select sites where work has progressed beyond slab stage (by identifying slightly older permits) and also returning to inspect timber frames if framing work had only recently commenced.

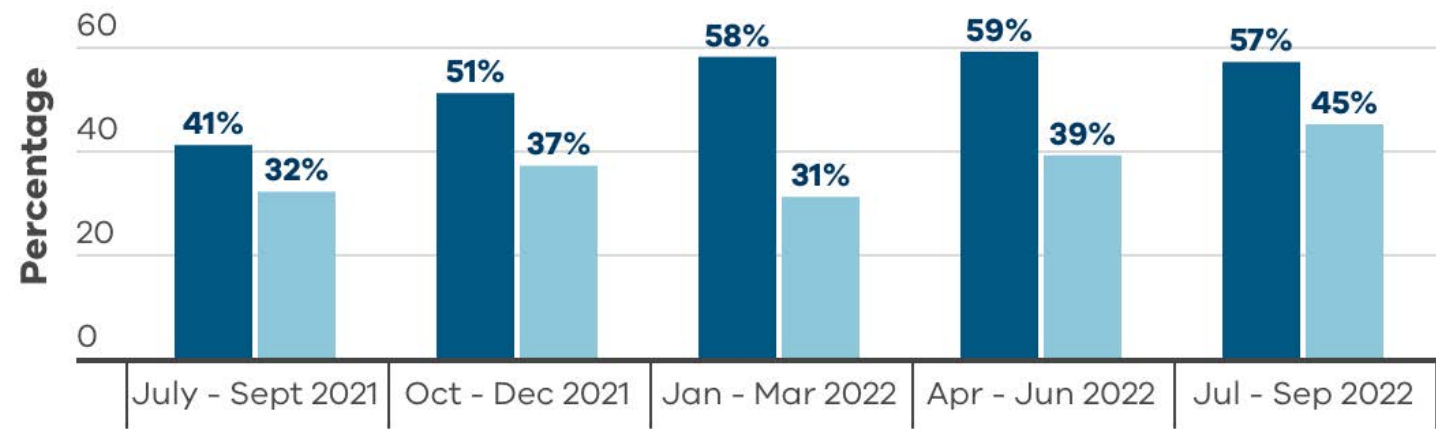
OBSERVED COMPLIANCE RISK – ALL INSPECTIONS



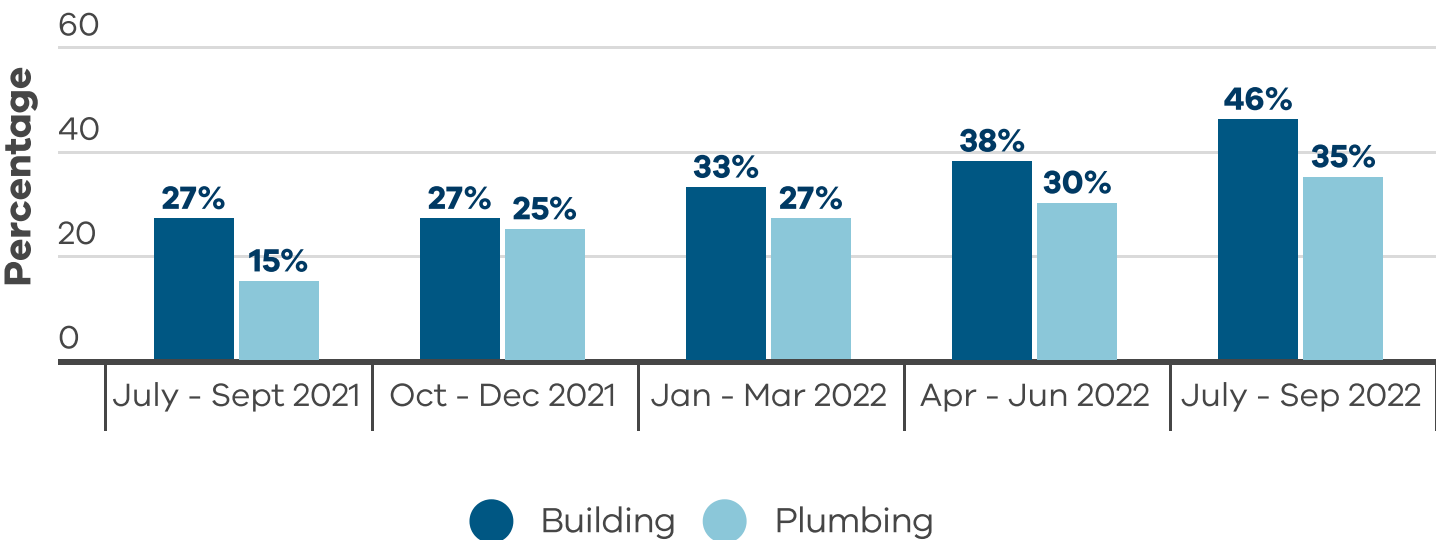
A compliance risk is defined as any non-compliant item (observed in a building under construction) which if not appropriately considered or addressed, has the potential to cause:

- an adverse effect on the safety or amenity of future building occupants and/or the public; and/or
- financial loss for future occupants or loss of structural integrity.

OBSERVED COMPLIANCE RISK - DOMESTIC WORKS



OBSERVED COMPLIANCE RISK - COMMERCIAL WORKS



CRITICAL ISSUE

2.5% of inspections identified non-compliant issues of a severity that could result in adverse effects on safety or amenity, financial loss for future occupants or loss of structural integrity if left untreated. This rate is the highest of any previous quarter in the past two years, as typically critical issues range between one and two per cent. Sites with OHS risk breaches in this category are referred to the relevant regulator on the same day. Details of the critical issues are outlined in **Appendix 3**.

2.3. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE VBA IN FY2022/23 Q1

The VBA sent 1,230 notifications to practitioners requiring them to respond to the compliance risks identified by the PIP. Typically:

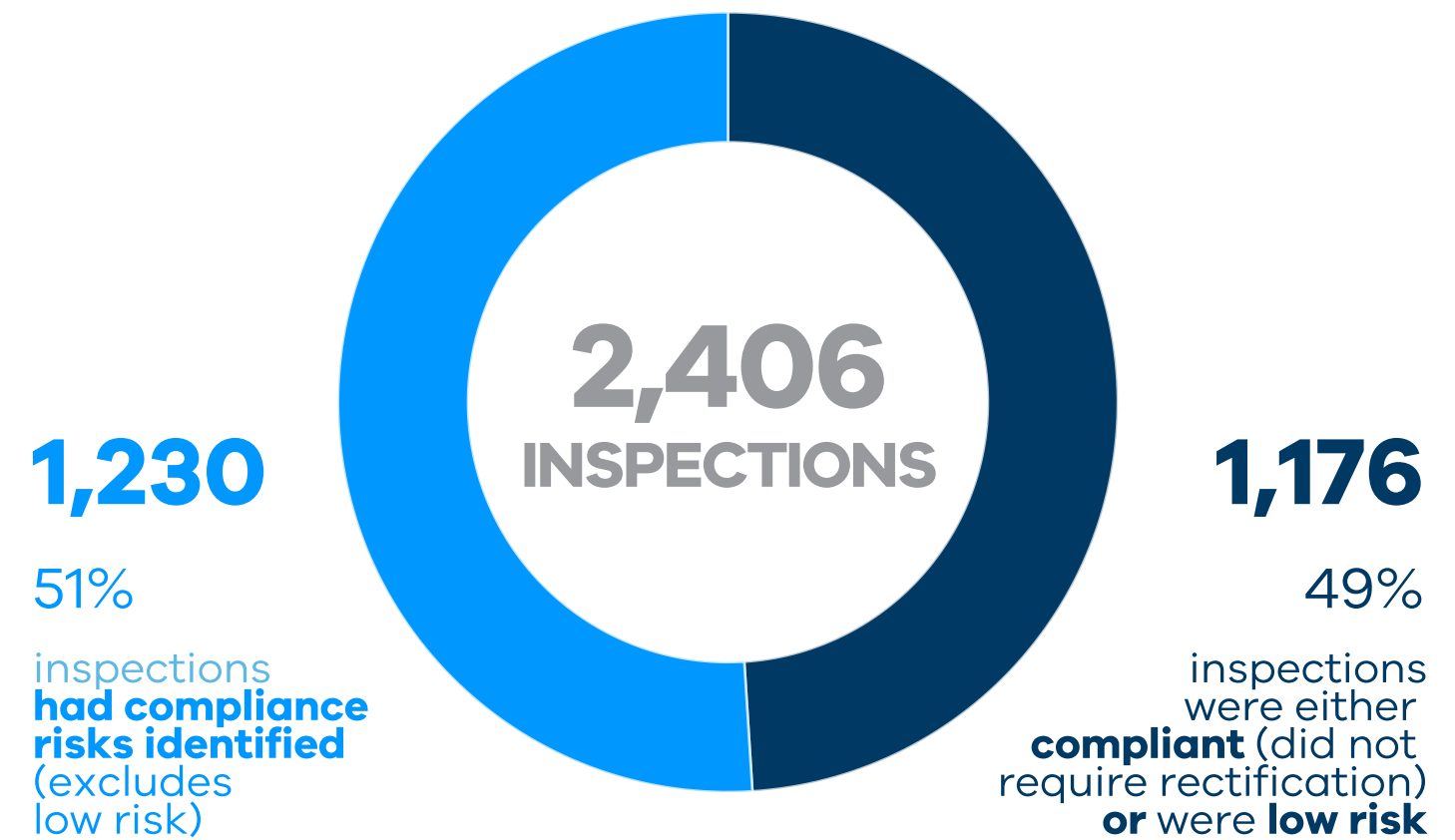
- 15 to 18 % of notifications sent to practitioners result in them providing all relevant documents (such as an approved performance solution, engineering drawings or certificate of compliance from a registered practitioner) showing how the work meets the requirements of the relevant building legislation. This is because practitioners are not currently required to lodge this documentation with the VBA.
- 1 to 2 % of notifications sent to practitioners result in them demonstrating that the work is incomplete rather than non-compliant and will be resolved as the build progresses.
- The remaining notifications of non-compliant work typically require the practitioner to rectify the work and for them to provide the relevant building surveyor (RBS) or the VBA with proof that the work was rectified.

2.4. ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

The VBA expects the RBS to manage any required rectification using their enforcement powers.

Typically, a verbal Direction to Fix is issued to the builder. However, depending on the severity and risk of the issue, the RBS may choose to issue a written Direction to Fix or a Building Notice to the builder or owner and notify the VBA. The VBA monitors all sites needing rectification to ensure the appropriate work is carried out. In exceptional circumstances, the VBA will issue a written Direction to Fix to the builder instead of the RBS.

This may occur when the RBS appears to have contributed to the non-compliance or where the issuance of an occupancy permit is imminent, and the VBA wants to ensure the non-compliance is addressed before the property is handed over to the owner. In FY2022/23 Q1, the VBA issued no written Directions to Fix.



WHO RECEIVES THE NOTIFICATIONS?

The builder and RBS are notified when compliance risks are identified. However, the builder is the primary addressee for potentially non-compliant building work if the elements have not been subject to a mandatory inspection stage. Where elements have been subject to mandatory inspection, the RBS is the primary addressee.

The RBS will also be the primary addressee when the endorsed building permit documentation is considered to lack sufficient information to show compliance for the purposes of the inspection (such as a performance solution) or in situations where the RBS has not considered mandatory items (such as fire separation in dual-occupancy buildings).

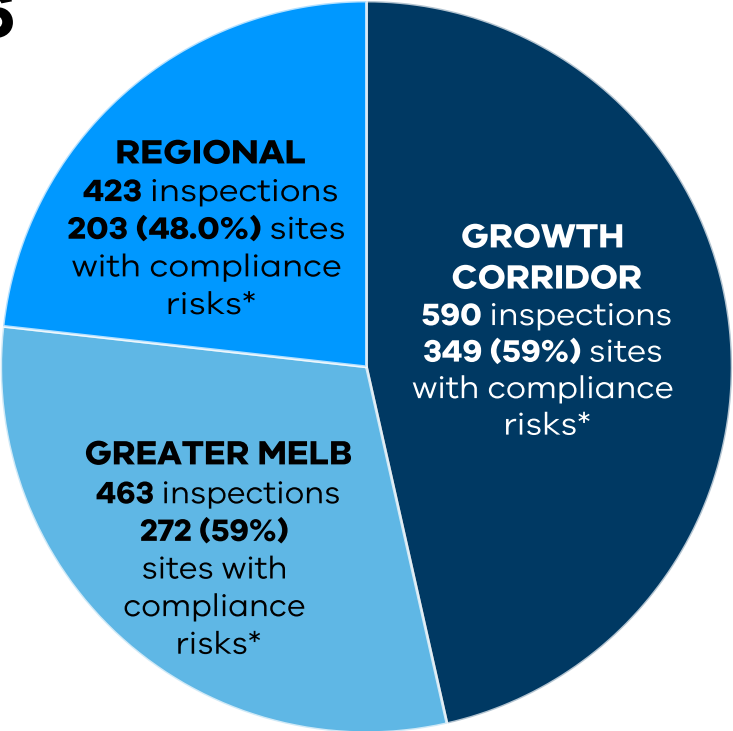
The builder is also the primary addressee for potentially non-compliant plumbing work because the plumber is not named in the building permit documents. The VBA relies on the builder to provide the plumber’s details. If provided, the VBA will also notify the plumber of any potential issues.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS FY2022/23 Q1



3.1. OVERVIEW OF BUILDING INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED FY22/23 Q1

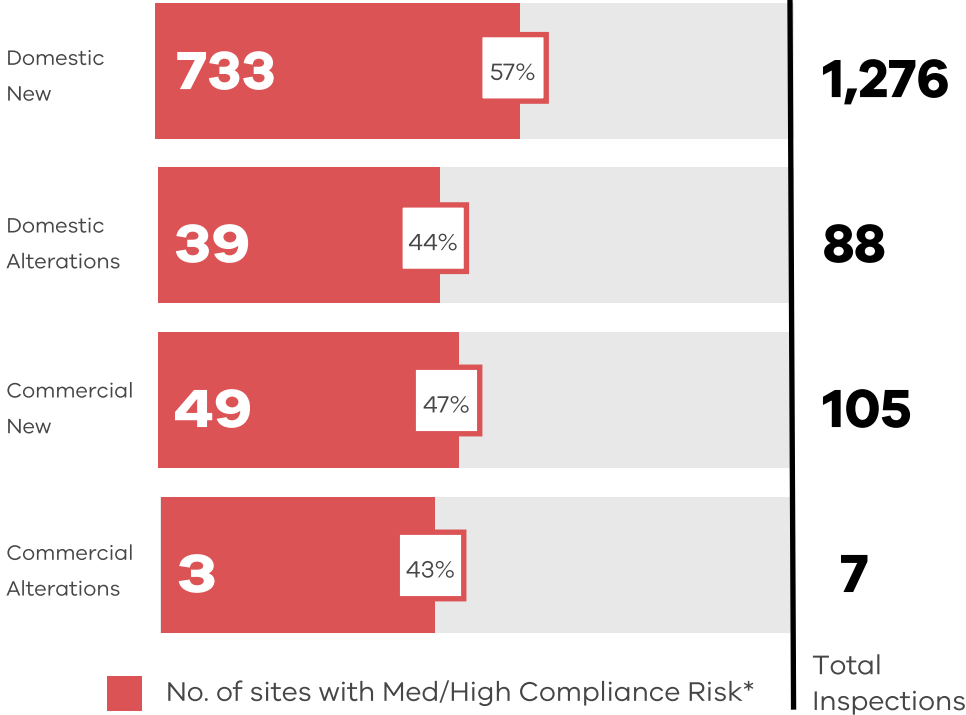
Total Building Inspections
1,476



GEOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Volume – Greater Melbourne ‘Growth Corridors’ had the highest number of inspections undertaken as this is where building permit activity is the greatest.

Inspection outcomes – Prevalence of non-compliant issues observed on building sites were lowest in regional Victoria. This trend is different to previous quarters where non-compliance rates were mostly consistent across all regions of Victoria except for one quarter in FY 2021/22 where issues observed on building Growth Corridors was 44%.



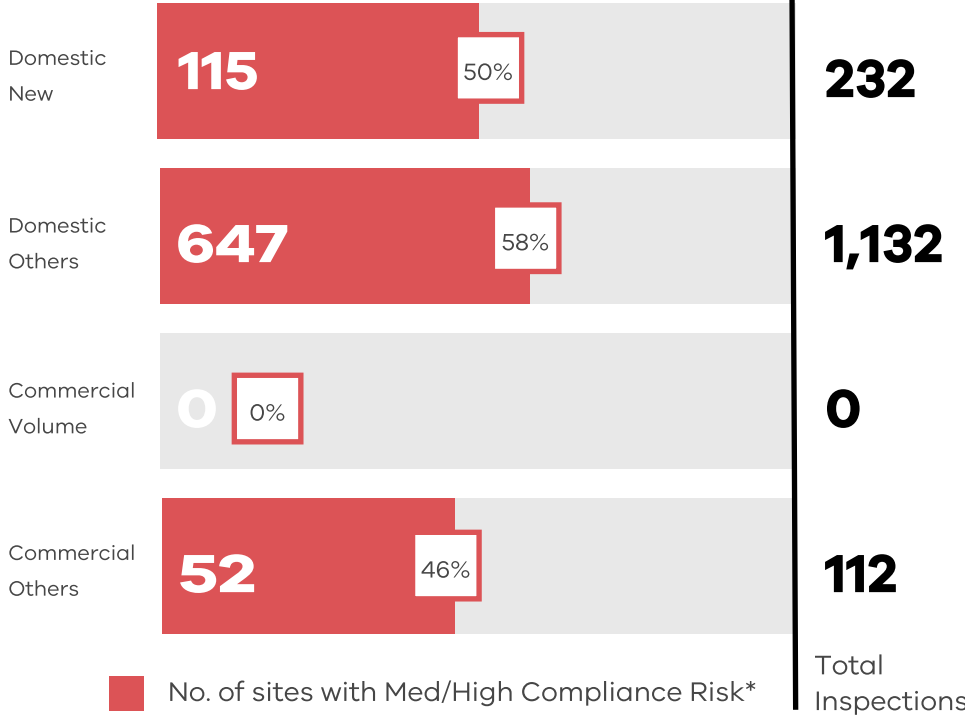
NEW BUILDS VS ALTERATIONS

Volume – ‘New Builds’ had the highest number of inspections undertaken, where building permit activity is also the greatest.

Inspection outcomes – A much higher prevalence of non-compliant issues was observed during inspections of New Buildings (57%), compared to buildings going under Alterations (44%) in domestic building sites.

The difference in commercial building sites was not as great, with prevalence of non-compliant issues in New Builds (47%) compared to Alterations (43%).

These trends in compliance risk have been consistent across all previous quarters in FY 2021/22



VOLUME VS OTHER BUILDERS

Volume – ‘Large Volume Builders’, proportionately have a higher volume of inspections undertaken because Large Volume Builders typically build new dwellings in growth corridor areas of Melbourne.

Inspection outcomes comparisons – A lower prevalence of non-compliant issues was found during inspections of sites managed by Large Volume Builders, compared to all other builders. This trend in compliance risk has been consistent across all previous quarters in FY 2021/22

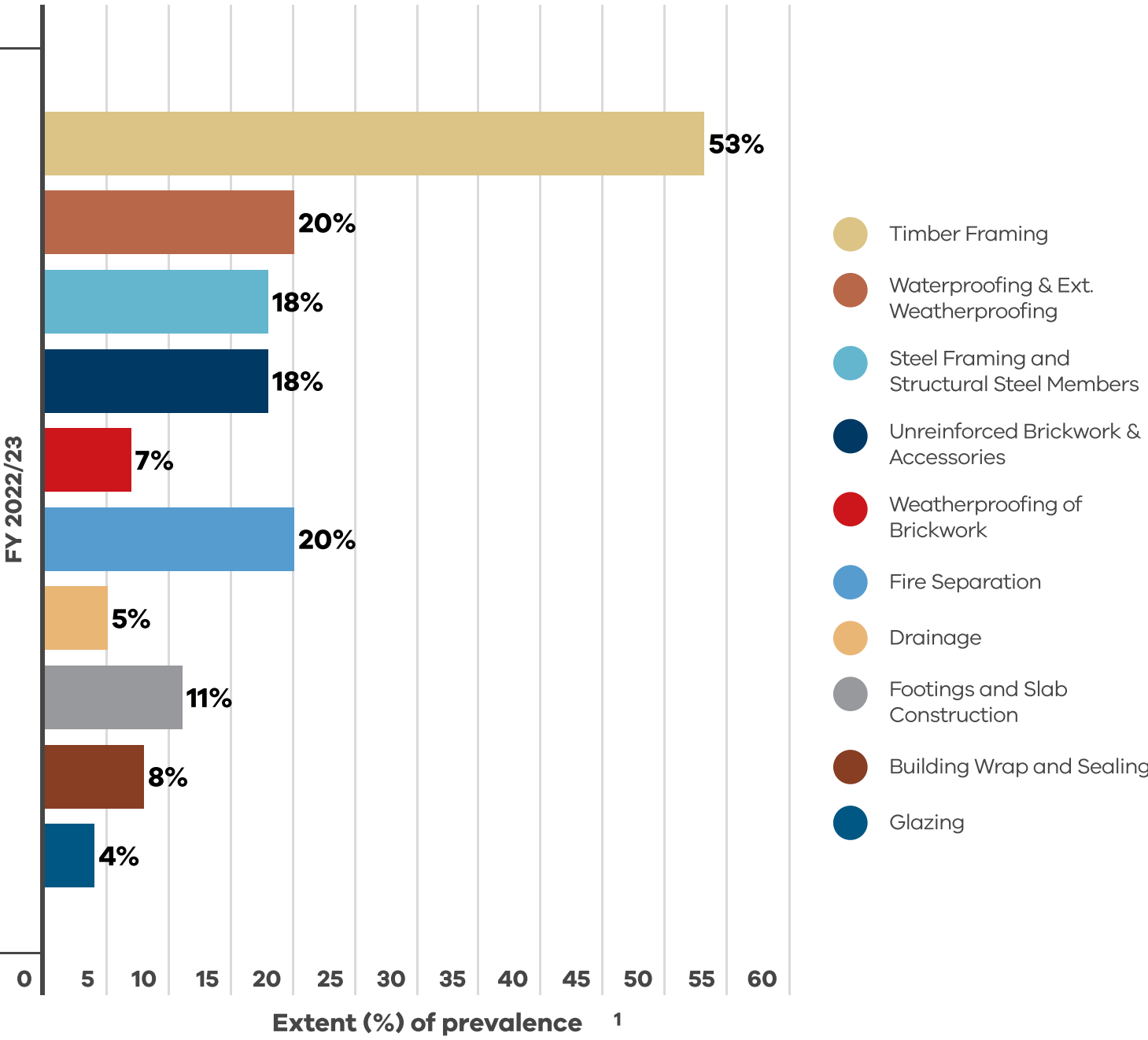
The VBA uses trends to update its risk-based site selection. This ensures sites are selected based on the highest risk of adverse effect on the safety and/or amenity of future building occupants, and the public.

*Number of sites inspected with at least one medium/high compliance risk observed.

3.2. OVERVIEW OF COMPLIANCE RISKS OBSERVED

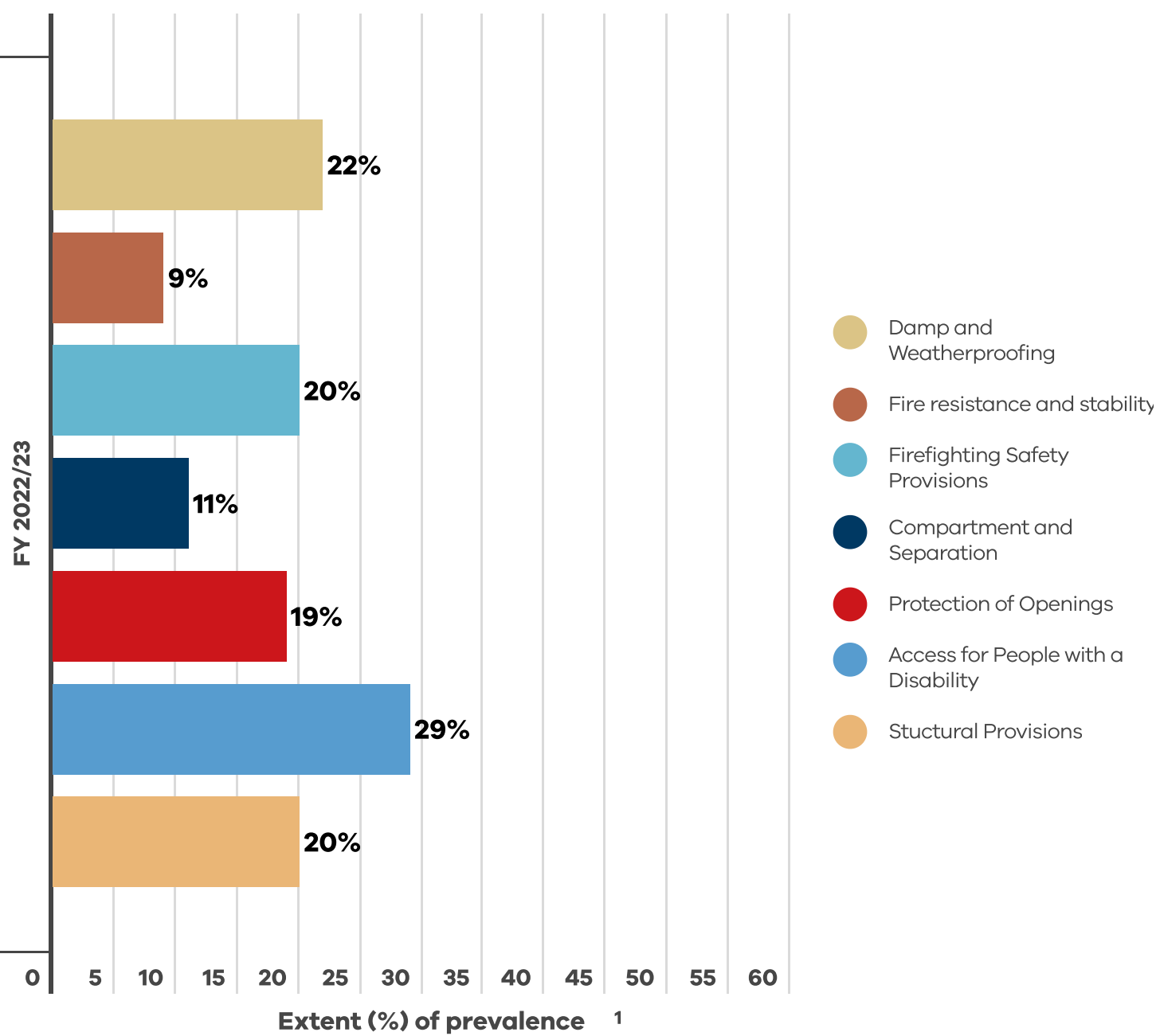
DOMESTIC

The most prevalent categories where non-compliance risks are observed (medium and high risk).



COMMERCIAL

The most prevalent categories where non-compliance risks are observed (medium and high risk).



¹ Extent (%) of prevalence is calculated by 'number of times an item was observed as non-compliant over the number of times an item was inspected'.

For more information on the nature of non-compliant issues observed in this quarter go to Section 3.3 ('Overview of Building Compliance Risks').

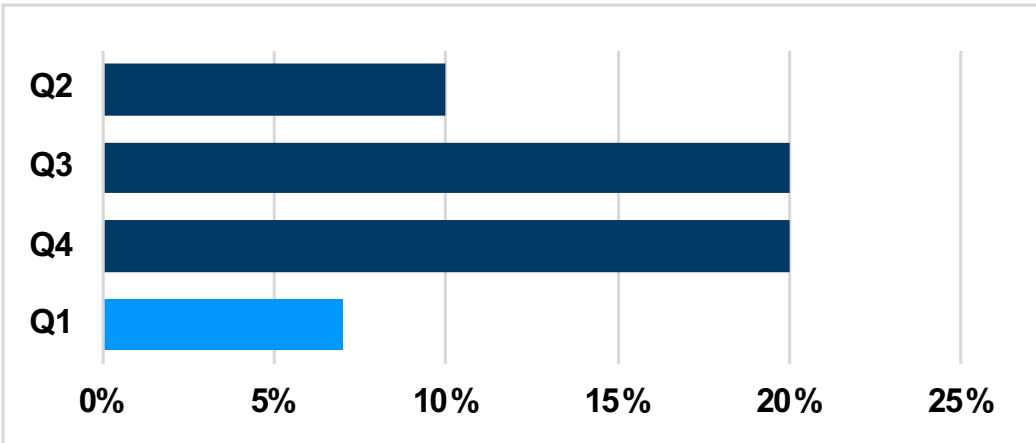
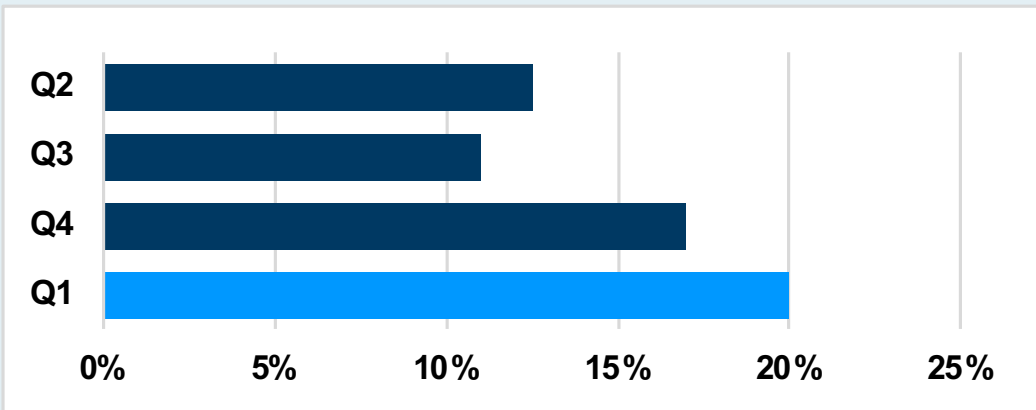
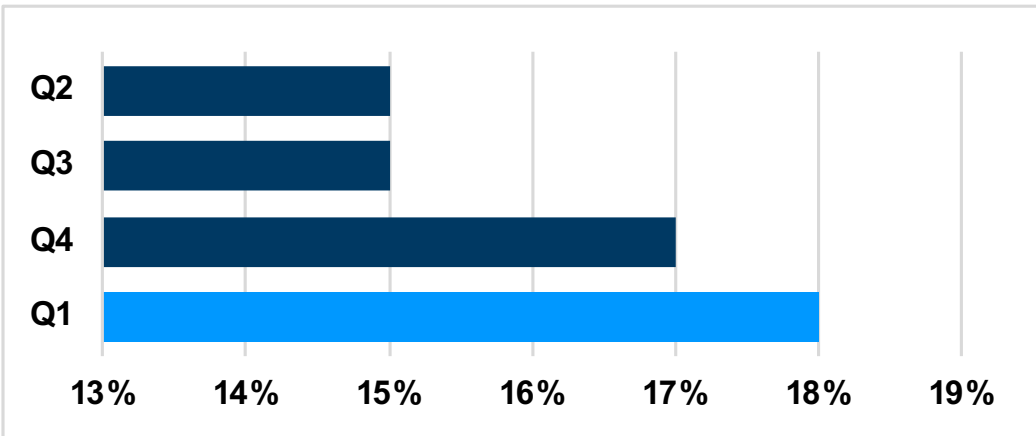
3.3. OVERVIEW OF BUILDING COMPLIANCE RISK DOMESTIC (CLASS 1)

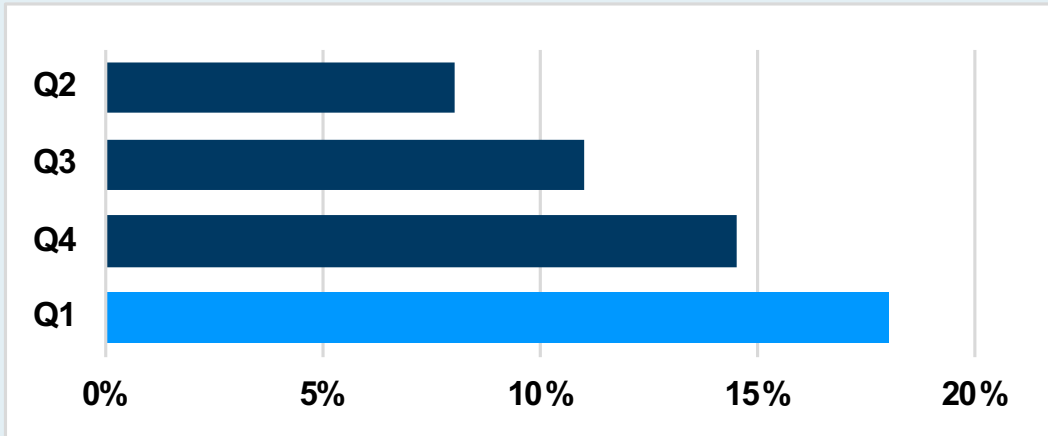
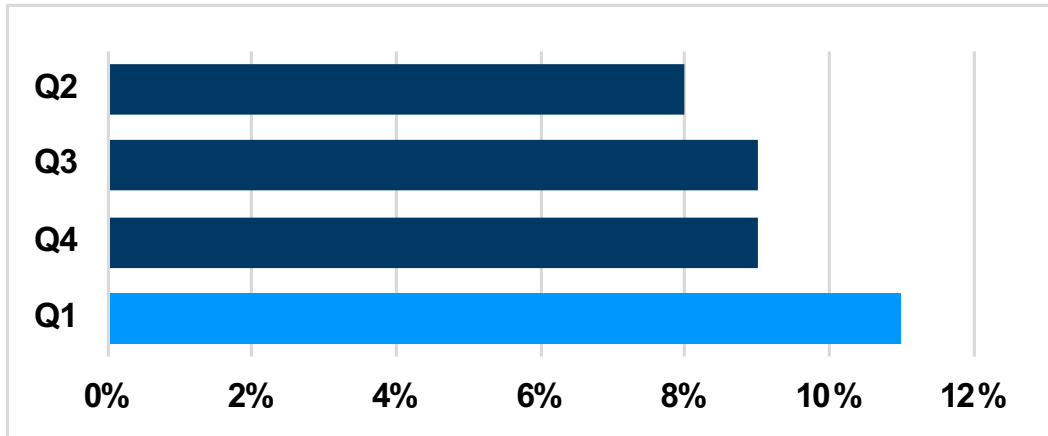
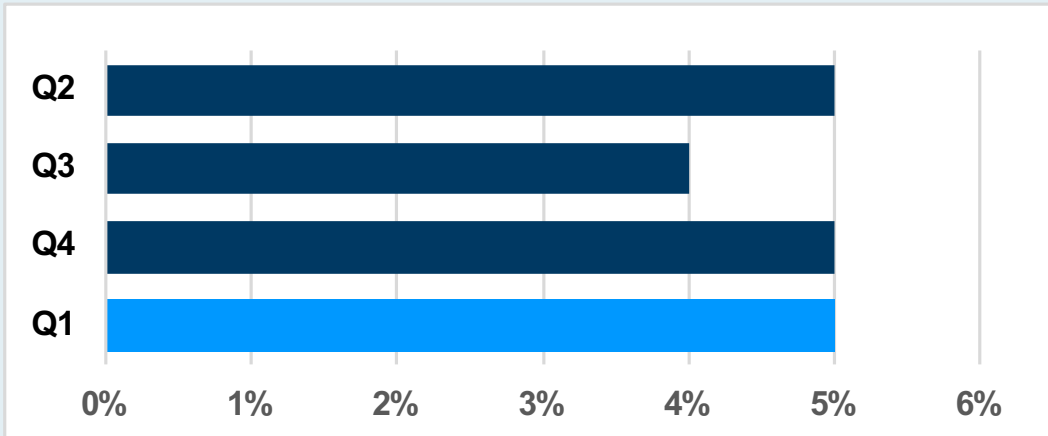
DOMESTIC (CLASS 1)

Approximately 20,000 elements were assessed across **1,323 domestic building sites** in Q1 (an average of **15 elements** per inspection), of which **1,488 elements** were identified as a compliance risk (**across 762 sites**) and required rectification or justification. Of these elements **61 were critical (across 52 sites)** and required immediate attention. The most common non-compliances observed within the top eight categories were:

The most common non-compliances observed within the TOP EIGHT CATEGORIES

Building Category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Timber Framing	439	- Non-compliant penetrations due to services (mostly plumbing). - Insufficient fixing, for example, nails used instead of hold down bolts or failure to use two nails per stud in various items. - Bottom plate overhang >10mm. - Lintels missing from windows and floor openings.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>51%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>58%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>53%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>53%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q2	51%	Q3	58%	Q4	53%	Q1	53%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q2	51%												
Q3	58%												
Q4	53%												
Q1	53%												
Wet Areas and external water proofing	88	- Water stop missing from wet areas (around bath hob beneath bath flange, shower enclosures, wet area thresholds and doors, floor junction of wet areas). - Standard plaster used behind laundry troughs. - Shower/bathroom waterproofing damaged. - Timber plates used on balcony are not of H4 or greater treated timber.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>17%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>14%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>15%</td></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>20%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q2	17%	Q3	14%	Q4	15%	Q1	20%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q2	17%												
Q3	14%												
Q4	15%												
Q1	20%												

Building Category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Weatherproofing of Brickwork	7	- Sill flashings missing around openings or not installed as required by manufacturer. - Damp proof course not extending to full part of walls. - Weep-holes to windows and other openings missing, weep-holes obstructed at garage slab, rendered weep-holes not cleaned out.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>7.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>10%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>20%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	7.5%	Q2	10%	Q3	20%	Q4	20%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	7.5%												
Q2	10%												
Q3	20%												
Q4	20%												
Fire Separation	130	- Fire separating boundary wall system not installed in accordance with manufacture installation requirements (No silicone along bottom track, no 20mm gap between frame and shaft liner, L clips are placed mid-way, clips not located at every stud, no mineral wool installed at wall junctions, brackets not installed on both sides of separating wall, use of damaged panels, using nails and not screws). - Gaps and holes in fire separation system between dwellings. 60/60/60 FRL not achieved on garage boundary walls.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>12.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>17%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	20%	Q2	12.5%	Q3	11%	Q4	17%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	20%												
Q2	12.5%												
Q3	11%												
Q4	17%												
Unreinforced Brickwork & Accessories	135	- No Lintel over meter box. - Brick ties missing or not attached to studs and expansions ties upside down. - No expansion foam within articulation joints. - No gaps at window where articulation joint is located.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>18%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>15%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>15%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>17%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	18%	Q2	15%	Q3	15%	Q4	17%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	18%												
Q2	15%												
Q3	15%												
Q4	17%												

Building Category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Steel Framing and Structural Steel Member	116	- Lintels not galvanised. - No structural grout under base plate of columns. - Structural integrity - Insufficient tightening of bolts at baseplates and steel member connection. Missing bolts and nuts not tightened to maintain structural integrity.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>18%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>14%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	18%	Q2	8%	Q3	11%	Q4	14%
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Q1	18%												
Q2	8%												
Q3	11%												
Q4	14%												
Footings and Slab Construction	105	- Brickwork overhang. - Reinforcing steel has exposed in the slab edge. - Slab cut for plumbing services.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>9%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>9%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	11%	Q2	8%	Q3	9%	Q4	9%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	11%												
Q2	8%												
Q3	9%												
Q4	9%												
Drainage	46	- Water pooling around foundations. - No step down in garages, step-downs less than 50m from dwellings. - Garage slabs lower than ground level without appropriate drainage. - Finished Floor Level of dwelling below finished surface level.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>4%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>5%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	5%	Q2	5%	Q3	4%	Q4	5%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	5%												
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Q4	5%												

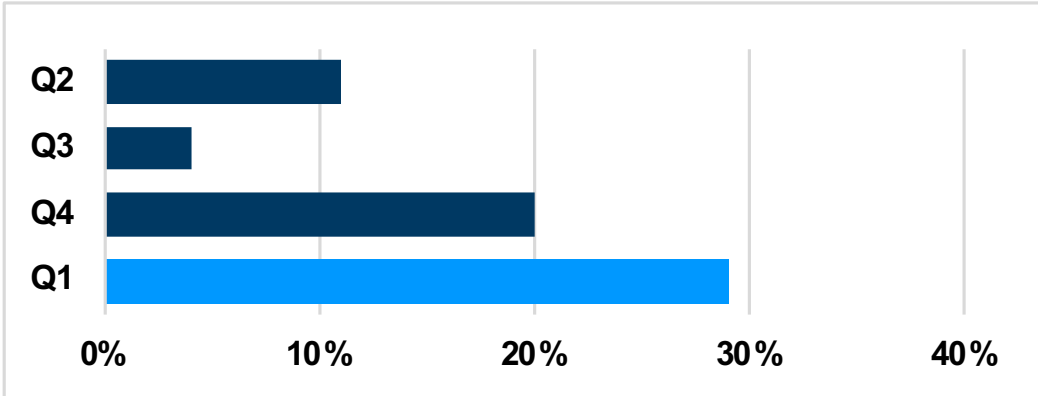
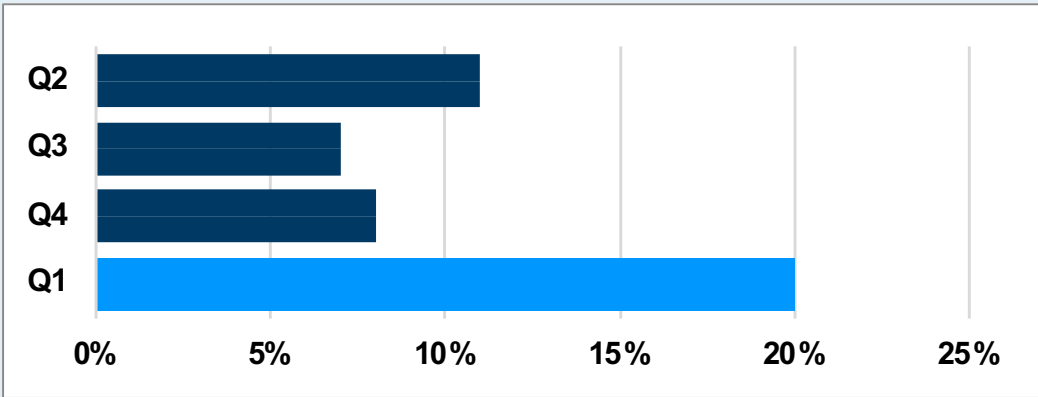
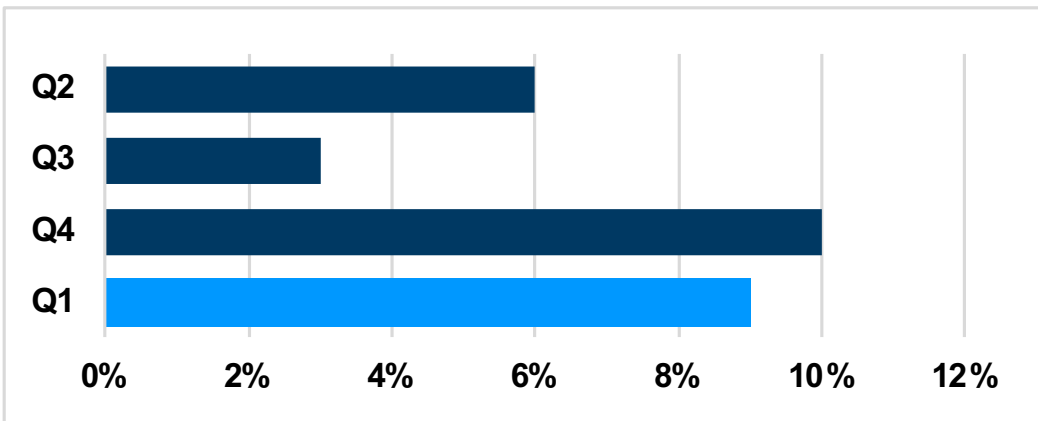
3.3. OVERVIEW OF COMMON NON-COMPLIANT ITEMS OBSERVED

COMMERCIAL (CLASS 2 TO 9)

Approximately 1,500 elements were assessed across **112 commercial building sites in Q1** (an average of 13 elements per inspection), of which 116 elements were identified as a compliance risk (**across 52 sites**) and required rectification or justification. There were no critical issues identified. The most common non-compliances observed within the top categories are:

The most common non-compliances observed within the TOP FIVE CATEGORIES

Building category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Fire Safety Provisions	37	- No temporary portable fire extinguishers provided to site or installed to every floor during construction. - Clearance between fire hydrant not achieved e.g. clearance around the valve handwheel to the fire hydrant. Minimum width of 1m not provided between hydrant and stair balustrading between basement and ground floor fire isolated stair well. - Booster assembly located within 10m of the front wall of the building without compliant shield wall. - Fire isolated exit riser heights are not consistent with adjacent riser variations greater than 5mm. - Fire-resistant door-sets have not been installed in accordance with AS1905, jamb cavities have not been backfilled in accordance with the section 5.	<table><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>10%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>16%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>18%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	20%	Q2	10%	Q3	16%	Q4	18%
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Q1	20%												
Q2	10%												
Q3	16%												
Q4	18%												
Damp and Weatherproofing	6	- No thresholds at doorways (to bathrooms, units). - No threshold between internal and external balcony. - No overflow provision provided to external balconies. - Inadequate fall for floor wastes in bathroom.	<table><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1</td><td>22%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>3%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>18%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	22%	Q2	11%	Q3	3%	Q4	18%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	22%												
Q2	11%												
Q3	3%												
Q4	18%												

Building category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Access for People with a Disability	9	- Hinge side clearance not provided. - Decals not contrasting. - Circulation space not provided (2070mm x 1450mm not met). - Handrail heights not within compliant range.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>28%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>12%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>20%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	28%	Q2	12%	Q3	5%	Q4	20%
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Q1	28%												
Q2	12%												
Q3	5%												
Q4	20%												
Structural Provisions	20	- Structural integrity compromised for service openings. - Steel frame has section mixed with timber framing. - Exposed steel at slab edge and to accommodate the relocation of plumbing services.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>20%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>12%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>8%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	20%	Q2	12%	Q3	7%	Q4	8%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	20%												
Q2	12%												
Q3	7%												
Q4	8%												
Fire Resistance and Stability	7	- Timber in the steel frame forming the fire rated separation wall. - Unprotected penetration in party walls and apartment floors. - C1.5 concession incorrectly applied, and type C construction applied when B is applicable.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>9%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>6%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>3%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>10%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	9%	Q2	6%	Q3	3%	Q4	10%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	9%												
Q2	6%												
Q3	3%												
Q4	10%												

3.4. COMPLIANCE RISK PREVALENCE - SINGLE VS DUAL OCCUPANCY DWELLINGS

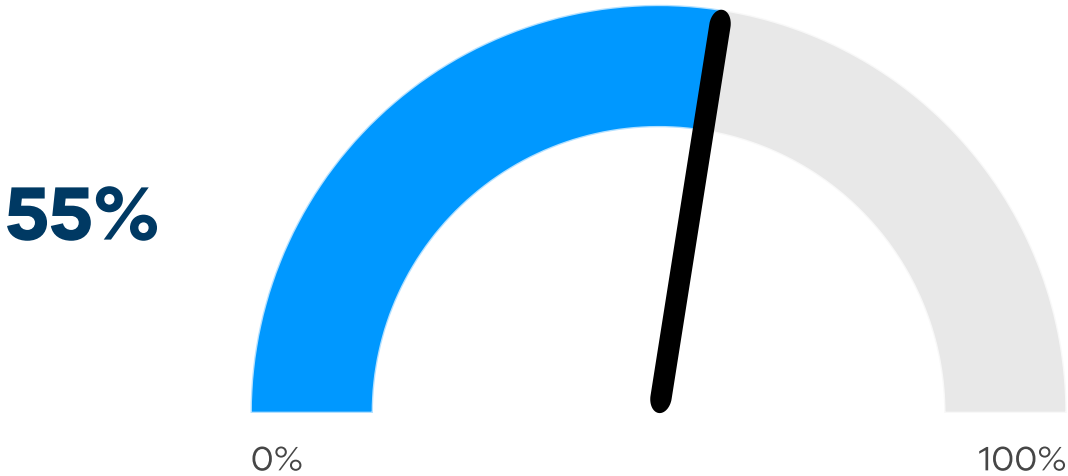
SINGLE OCCUPANCY



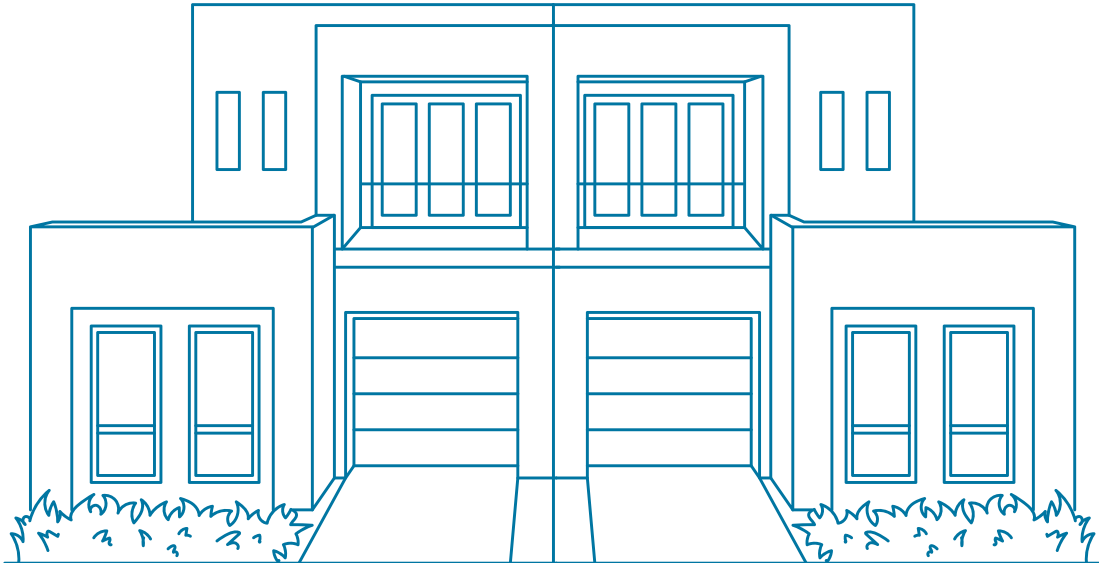
Common Building Issues

- Timber Framing
- Wet areas and External waterproofing
- Unreinforced Brickwork and accessories
- Steel Framing and Structural Steel members
- Footings and Slab Constructions
- Fire Separation

● Prevalence of Compliance Risk



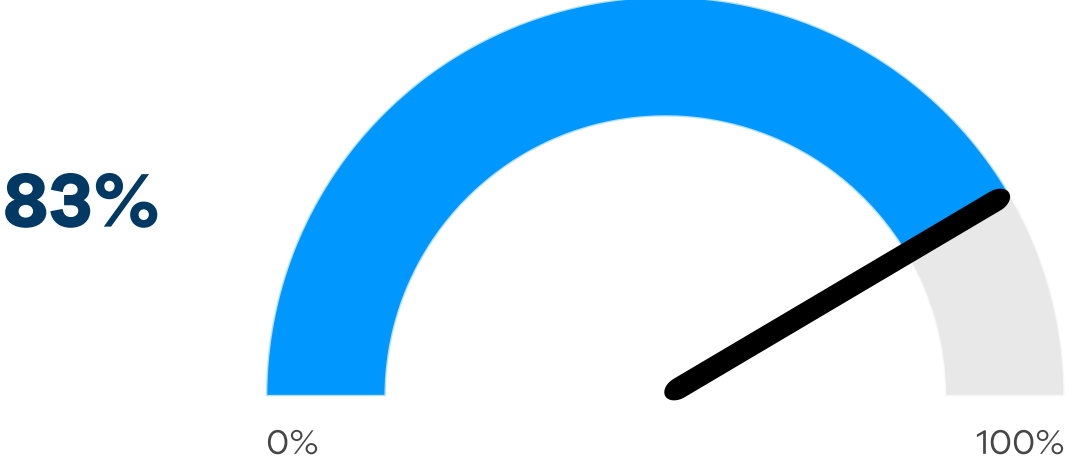
DUAL OCCUPANCY



Common Building Issues

- Fire Separation
- Timber Framing
- Steel Framing and Structural Steel members
- Unreinforced Brickwork and Accessories
- Wet Areas and External Waterproofing
- Footings and Slab constructions

● Prevalence of Compliance Risk



3.5. PREVALENCE OF BUILDING COMPLIANCE RISKS BY CLASS

Class	No. of sites inspected	% of compliance risks across class from all inspections	Areas of serious compliance risk for building
Domestic (Class 1 and 10)	1,364	57%	• Timber Framing • Unreinforced Brickwork and Accessories • Wet Areas and External Waterproofing • Fire Separation • Steel Framing and Structural Steel Members • Footings and Slab Construction • Building Wrap and Sealing • Drainage
Apartments ≥2 sole occupancy (Class 2 + mixed use) and group dwellings and hospitals (Classes 3, 4, 9a&c)	54	46%	• Fire Fighting Equipment, Provision of Escape, Construction of Exits • Protection of Openings • Structural Provisions • Fire Resistance and Stability
Assembly building with no dwellings (Class 9b)	26	42%	• Structural Provisions • Damp and Weatherproofing • Access for People with a Disability • Fire Resistance and Stability

Class	No. of sites inspected	% of compliance risks across class from all inspections	Areas of serious compliance risk for building
Office buildings and cafes, shops and markets with no dwellings (Classes 5, 6 + mixed use)	10	60%	• Fire Fighting Equipment, Provision of Escape, Construction of Exits • Access for People with a Disability • Structural Provisions
Warehouse and factories and carparks – no dwellings (Classes 7a, 7b, 8)	22	45%	• Structural Provisions • Fire Fighting Equipment, Provision of Escape, Construction of Exits • Protection of Openings

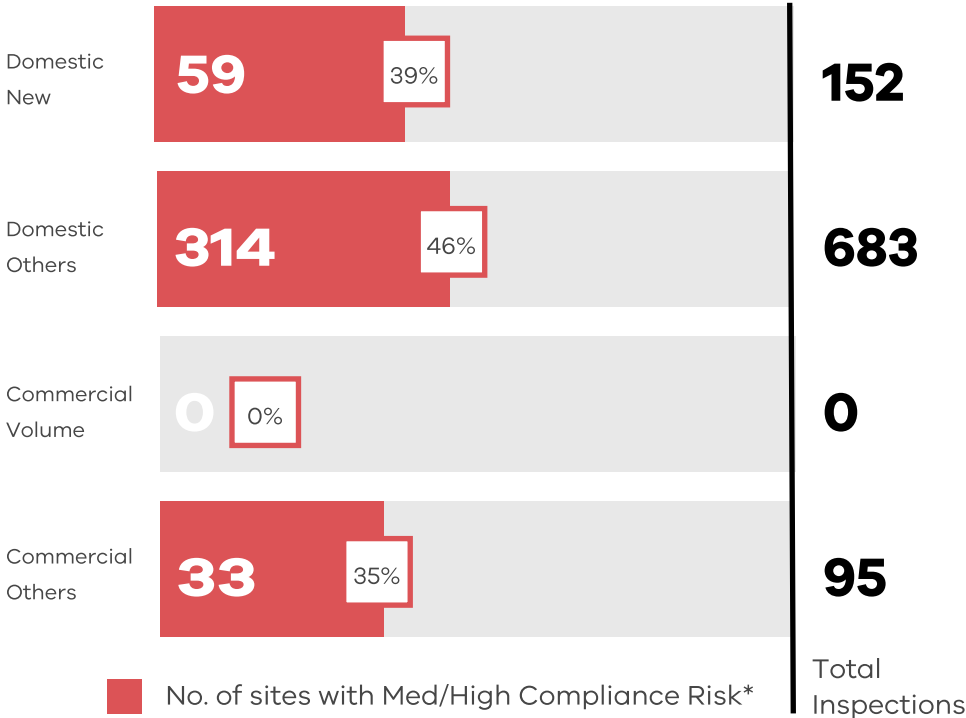
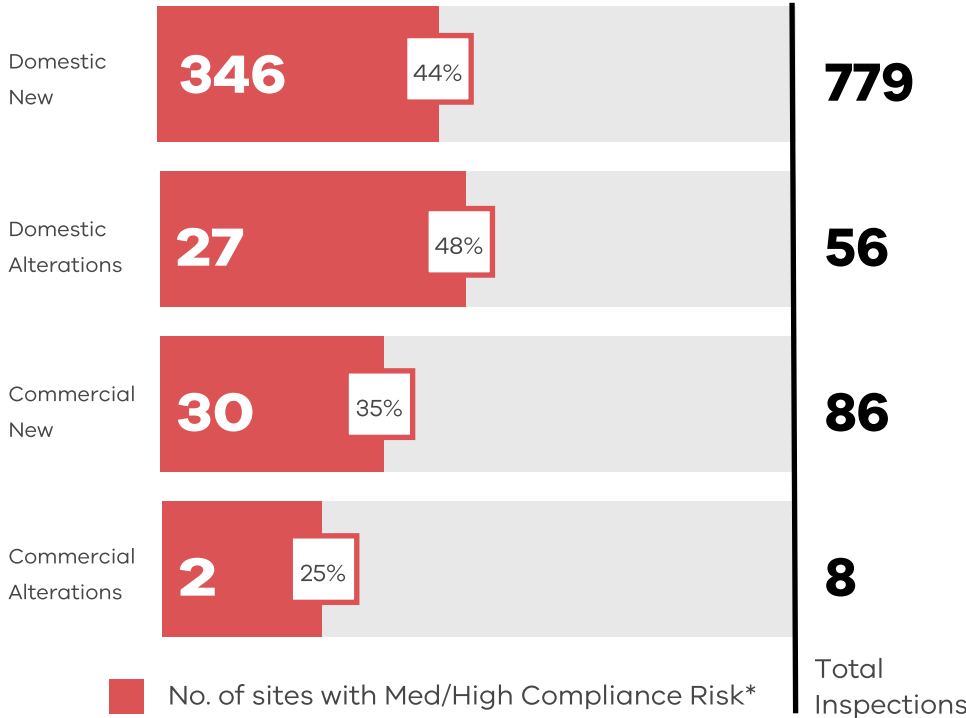
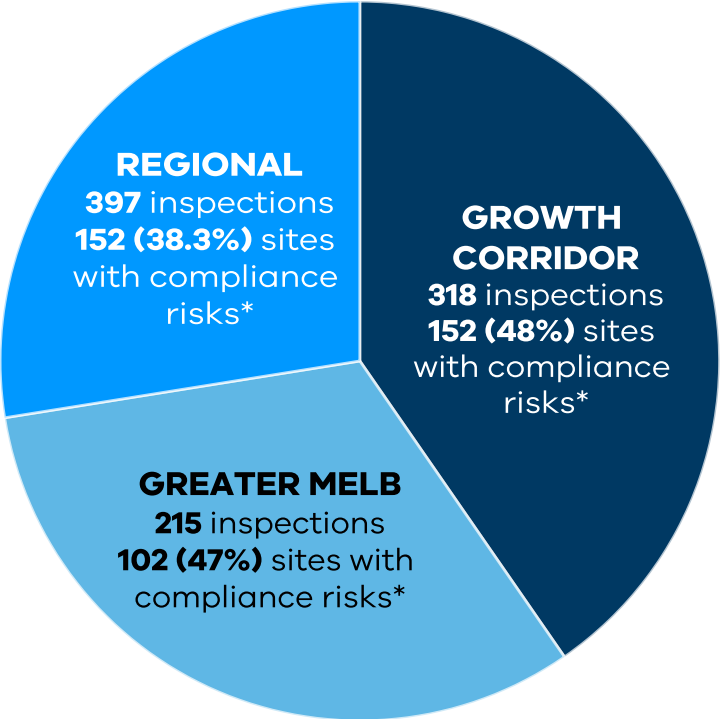


PLUMBING INSPECTIONS FY2022/23 Q1



4.1. OVERVIEW OF PLUMBING INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED Q1

Total Plumbing Inspections
930



GEOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Volume – Greater Melbourne ‘Growth Corridors’ had the highest number of inspections undertaken, as this is where building permit activity is the greatest.

Inspection outcomes – Prevalence of non-compliant issues observed during plumbing inspections were lowest in ‘Regional’ Victoria. This trend is different to previous quarters in FY2021/22 where non-compliance rates were mostly consistent across all areas of Victoria.

NEW BUILDS VS ALTERATIONS

Volume – ‘New Builds’ had the highest number of inspections undertaken, where building permit activity is also the greatest.

Inspection outcomes – A higher prevalence of non-compliant issues was observed during plumbing inspections of ‘New Builds’ compared to buildings undergoing alterations in commercial constructions. The reverse trend was observed in domestic buildings, where building undergoing alterations were slightly higher compared to New Builds.

The trend of higher prevalence of non-compliant issues in New buildings has been mostly consistent across previous quarters in FY2021/22.

LARGE VOLUME BUILDERS VS OTHER BUILDERS

Volume – ‘Large Volume builders’ proportionately have a higher volume of inspections undertaken because Large Volume Builders typically build new dwellings in growth corridors areas of Melbourne.

Inspection outcomes comparisons –Prevalence of non-compliant issues observed during plumbing inspections were lower in Volume builders (39%) compared to all Other builders (46%). This trend is different to previous quarters in FY2021/22 where there was no difference in non-compliance rates between Volume and Other builders.

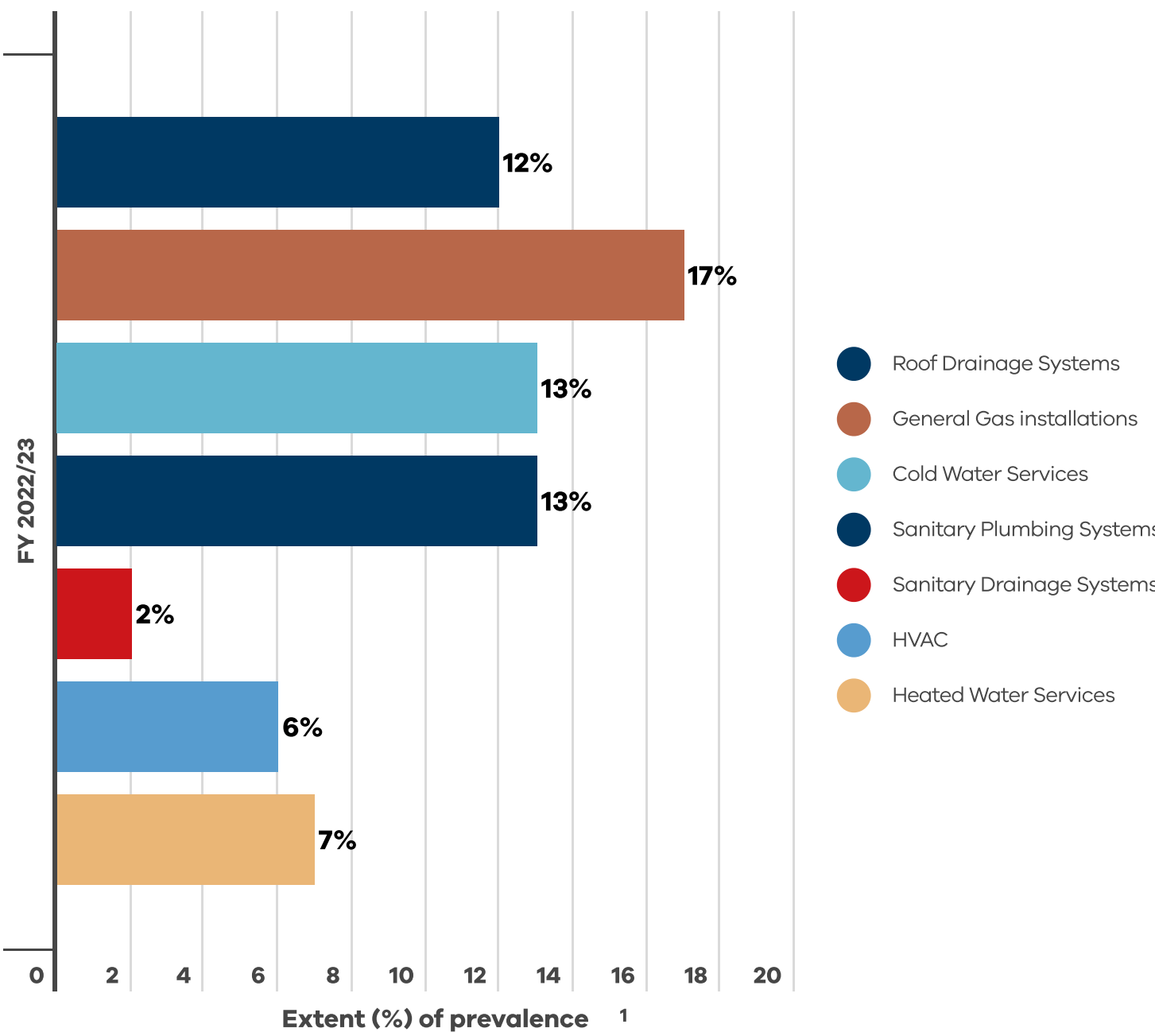
The VBA uses trends to update its risk-based site selection. This ensures sites are selected based on the highest risk of adverse effect on the safety and/or amenity of future building occupants, and the public.

*Number of sites inspected with at least one medium/high compliance risk observed.

4.2. OVERVIEW OF COMPLIANCE RISKS OBSERVED

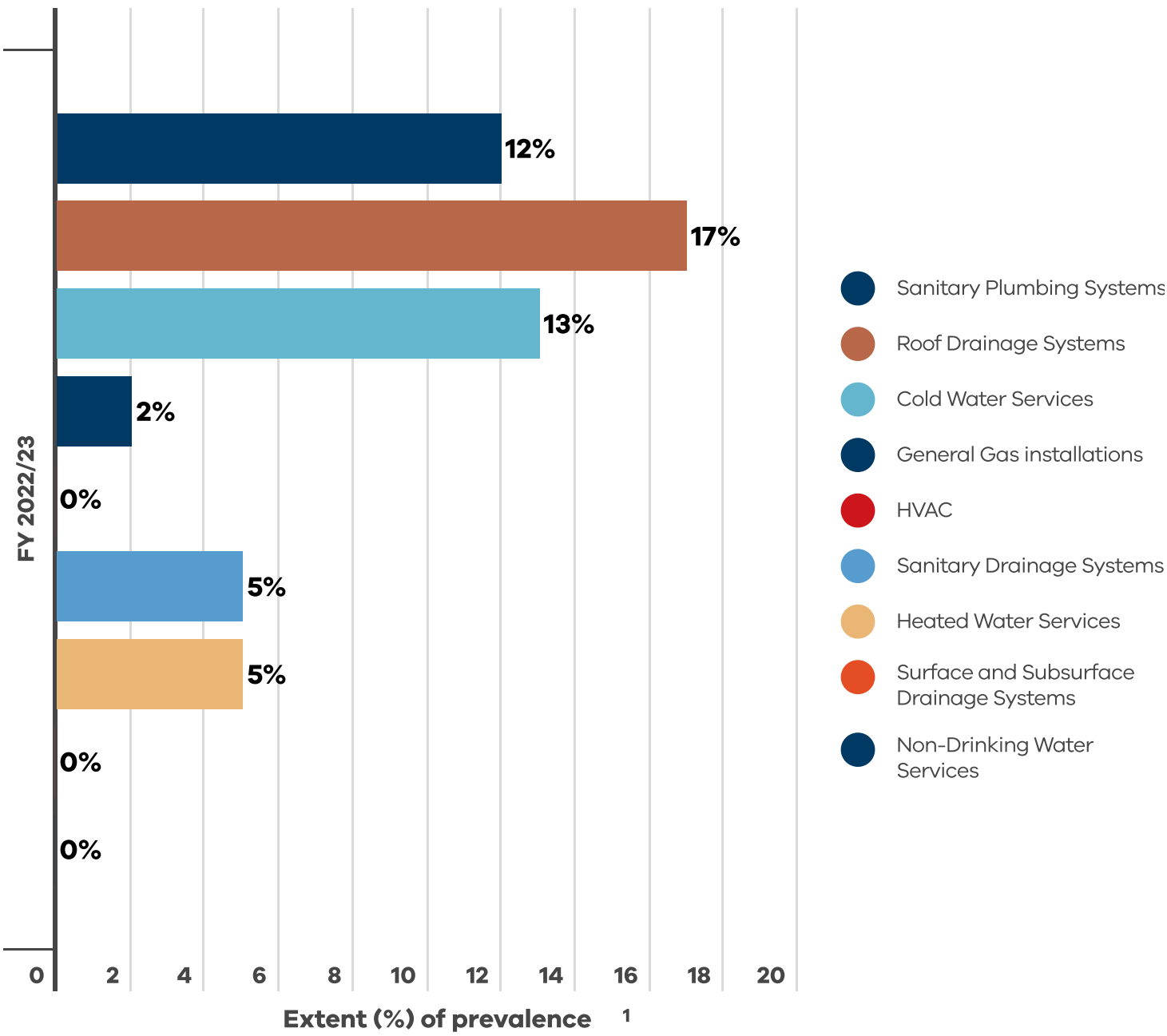
DOMESTIC

The most prevalent categories where non-compliance risks are observed (excluding low risk), remain consistent each quarter.



COMMERCIAL

The most prevalent categories where non-compliance risks are observed (excluding low risk), remain consistent each quarter.



¹ Extent (%) of prevalence is calculated by 'number of times an item was observed as non-compliant over the number of times an item was inspected'.

For more information on the nature of non-compliant issues observed this quarter go to Section 4.3 ('Overview of Plumbing Compliance Risks')

4.3. OVERVIEW OF COMMON NON-COMPLIANT ITEMS OBSERVED

DOMESTIC

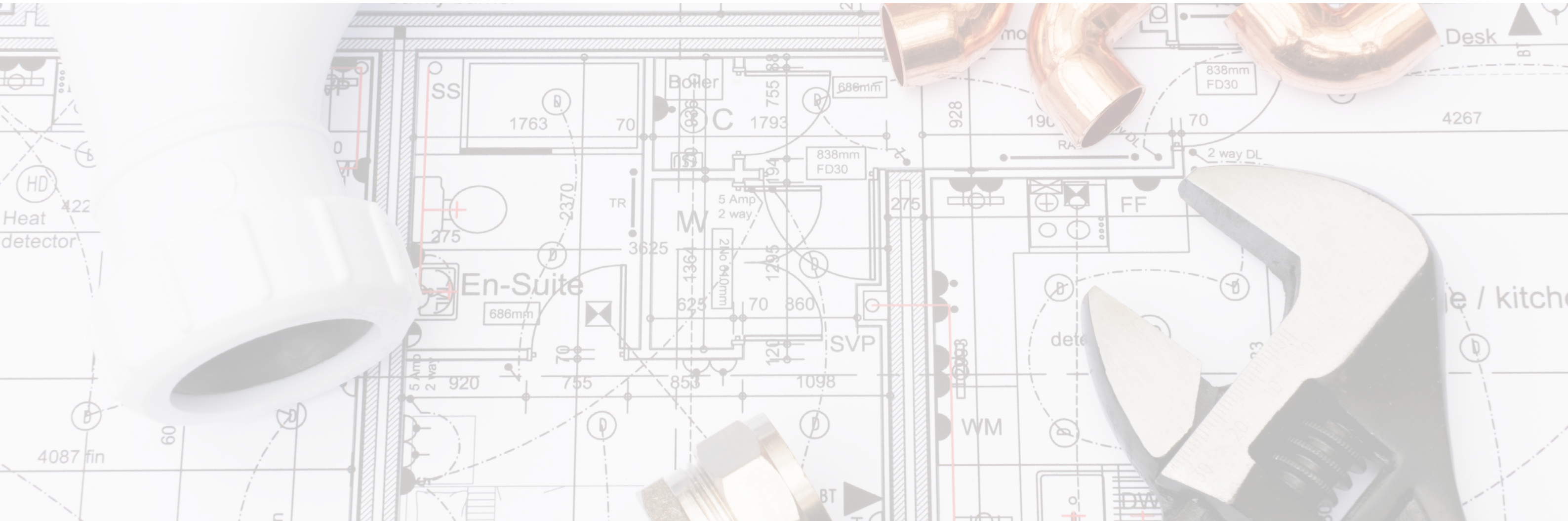
Approximately **9,000 elements** were inspected across **835 inspections** (an average of **11 elements** per inspection) and **686 elements** (across 373 sites) were identified as a compliance risk requiring rectification or justification. Six critical issues (across 5 sites) were observed and included OHS issues. The most common non-compliances observed within the top 6 categories are:

The most common non-compliances observed within the TOP SIX CATEGORIES

Plumbing category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
General Gas Installation	137	- Gas flue clearance at a minimum of 500mm above roof is not achieved. - Insufficient separation of gas piping with other services (electrical and water). - Gradient to the ducted heater flue grading away from the appliance towards the flue elbow. - Reversion fittings not installed on the accessible multilayer gas piping. - Exposed multi-layer gas pipe to UV and Proprietary gas piping not labelled at gas meter.	<table><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1</td><td>17%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>15%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>13%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>10%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	17%	Q2	15%	Q3	13%	Q4	10%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	17%												
Q2	15%												
Q3	13%												
Q4	10%												
Roof Drainage Systems	94	- Pressure flashing not constructed appropriately and not fixed at the required intervals and valley gutters not fixed at required intervals. - Sumps undersize and/or discharge through non-compliant side chutes. - Soaker flashing undersize and/or soaker flashing installed against the direction of flow and the stand appears to be undersized. - To support the suspended stormwater, drain at minimum required intervals and to fasten the downpipe at minimum required intervals. - Several 'box gutter' issues (change of direction, incorrectly terminated, reduced in size and / or insufficient overflow provision. Box gutter fixed to frame. - Multiple flashings/capping issues: Undersized, missing pressure flashings and pressure flashings applied to unsmooth brickwork. Spreaders discharging over flashings. Incorrect fall away from roof on parapet capping. Apron flashings not secured at 500mm intervals. Lead flashing not stepped/flushed.	<table><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1</td><td>12%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>11%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>11%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	12%	Q2	11%	Q3	11%	Q4	11%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	12%												
Q2	11%												
Q3	11%												
Q4	11%												

Plumbing category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Sanitary Plumbing Systems	102	- Sanitary and drainage vents not supported appropriately and drainage vents with insufficient gradient. 88-degree junctions installed on a graded sewer. - Expansion joints not clipped and not installed on above ground sanitary drains. - Junction fittings installed in exclusion zones at several sites.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>13.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>15.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>12.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>16.5%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	13.5%	Q2	15.5%	Q3	12.5%	Q4	16.5%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	13.5%												
Q2	15.5%												
Q3	12.5%												
Q4	16.5%												
Cold Water Services	102	- Water service services not protected through concrete slab. - Evaporative cooling unit water connection installed between roof covering and flashing and condensate drains do not discharge over a down pipe. - Issues with separations between water and other services	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>12.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>8.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>5.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>8.5%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	12.5%	Q2	8.5%	Q3	5.5%	Q4	8.5%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	12.5%												
Q2	8.5%												
Q3	5.5%												
Q4	8.5%												
Sanitary Drainage Systems	27	- Minimum required separation between Overflow Relief Gully (ORG) and the lowest fixture not met. - No inspection opening cover and ORG grate not removable. - Inspection shaft covers not installed and not independently supported. - No concrete support under drainage bends and sewer drainage with incorrect fall.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>2.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>6.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>3.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>3.0%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	2.0%	Q2	6.0%	Q3	3.5%	Q4	3.0%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	2.0%												
Q2	6.0%												
Q3	3.5%												
Q4	3.0%												

Plumbing category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Heated Water Services	5	- Several issues with solar hot water pipes: Solar hot water pipes passing under tiles non-compliantly and penetrating the roof through a non-compliant flashings (collar flashings not used for water supply roof penetrations) and insufficient clearance from other services (gas and electrical). - Solar flow and return lines not insulated and/or supported appropriately (not clipped at appropriate intervals). - Solar flow and return lines installed under roof tiles and not penetrating the roof coverings appropriately.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>6%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>4%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>6%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	7%	Q2	6%	Q3	4%	Q4	6%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	7%												
Q2	6%												
Q3	4%												
Q4	6%												



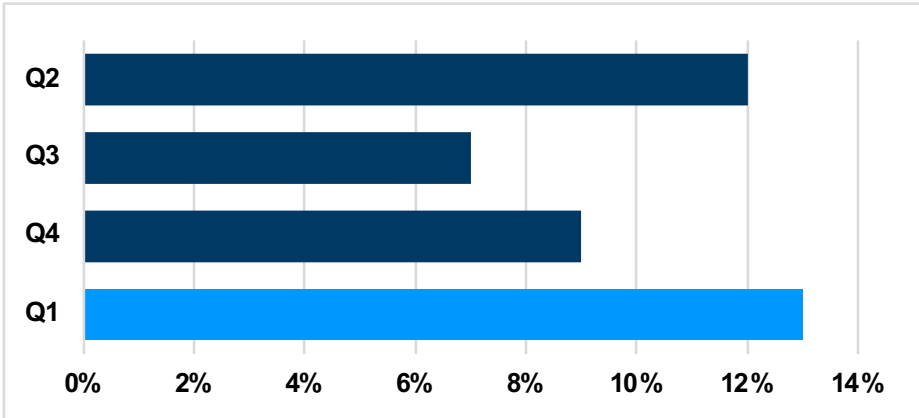
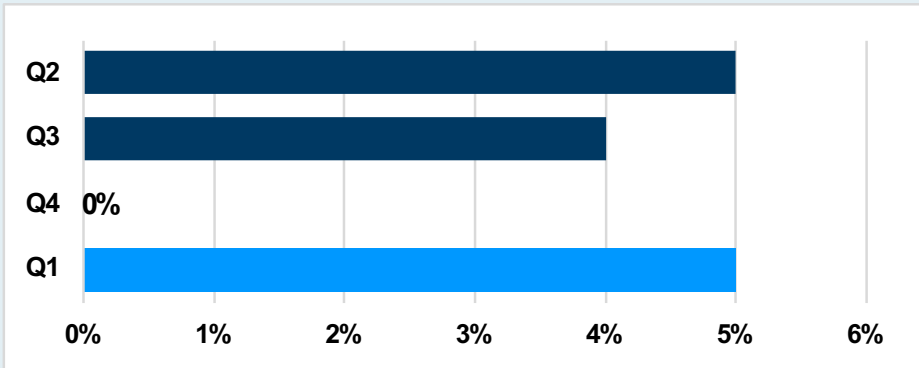
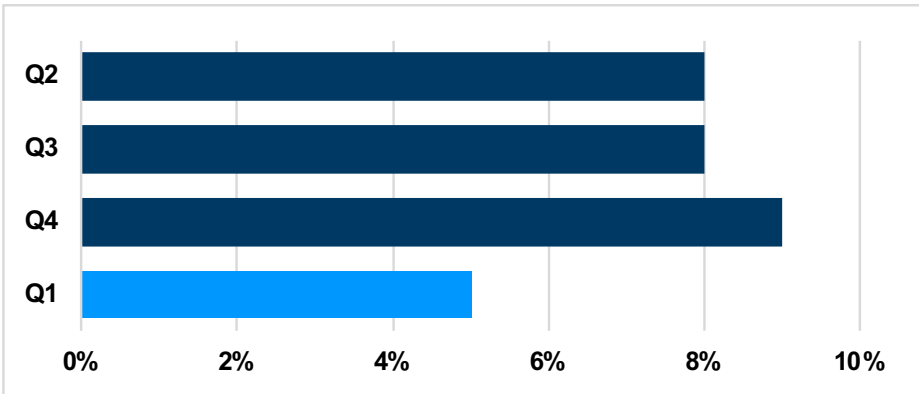
4.3. OVERVIEW OF COMMON NON-COMPLIANT ITEMS OBSERVED

COMMERCIAL

Approximately 2,000 elements were inspected across **95 sites and 72 elements (across 33 sites)** were identified as a compliance risk requiring rectification or justification. No critical issues were found. The most common non-compliances observed within the top 6 categories are:

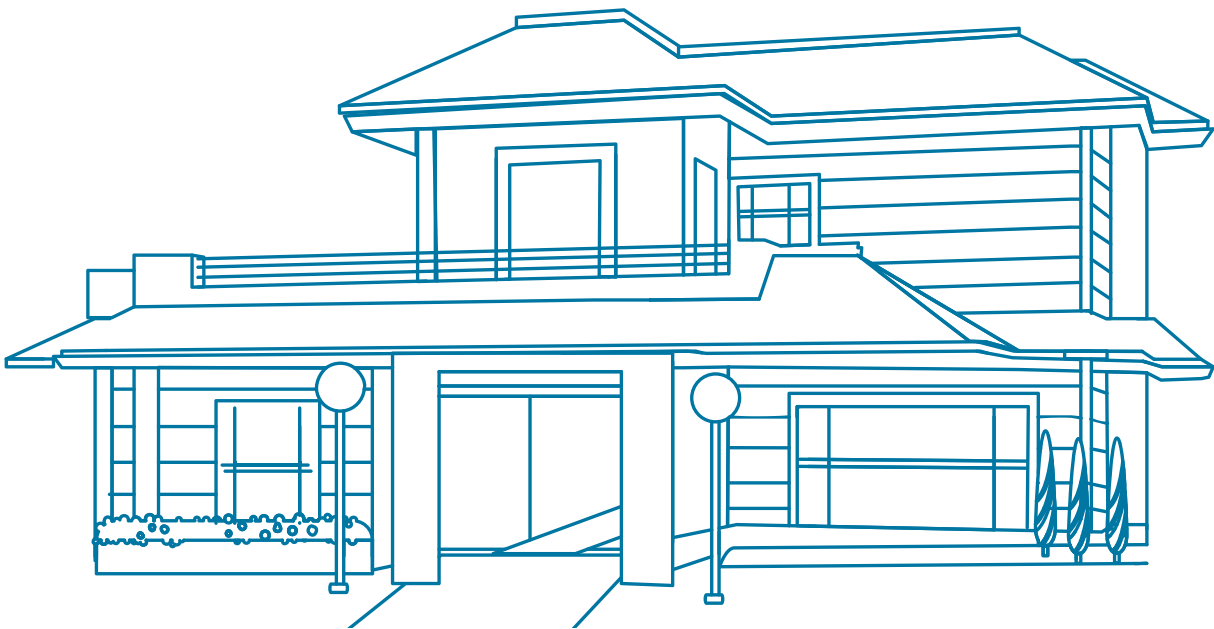
The most common non-compliances observed within the TOP FIVE CATEGORIES

Building category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevelance per quarter										
Roof Drainage Systems	13	- Sumps undersize and/or discharge through non-compliant side chutes. - Insufficient width of box gutter for commercial (200mm). Several box gutter issues; incorrectly terminated, reduced in size and/or insufficient overflow provision. - Roofing – valley gutter installed on a 4-degree pitched roof, upper roof discharging uncontrolled onto the lower roof, valley catchment exceeding 20sqm of roof.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalance</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>17%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>12%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>21%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>14%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalance	Q1	17%	Q2	12%	Q3	21%	Q4	14%
Quarter	Prevalance												
Q1	17%												
Q2	12%												
Q3	21%												
Q4	14%												
Sanitary Plumbing Systems	10	- Sanitary and drainage vents not supported appropriately and drainage vents with insufficient gradient. 88-degree junctions installed on a graded sewer. - Expansion joints not clipped and not installed on above ground sanitary drains. - Junction fittings installed in exclusion zones at several sites.	<table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalance</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>9%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalance	Q1	5%	Q2	8%	Q3	8%	Q4	9%
Quarter	Prevalance												
Q1	5%												
Q2	8%												
Q3	8%												
Q4	9%												

Plumbing category	No. of non-compliant items in category	Common non-compliance in each category	Prevalence per quarter										
Cold Water	12	- Backflow prevention required on flexible shower hoses that reach the floor and toilet. - Insufficient separation from electrical and gas services and recycled water, fire and water services clipped together. - No pressure limiting devices installed into meter assembly. - Water service not protected through slab.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>13%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>12%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>7%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>9%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	13%	Q2	12%	Q3	7%	Q4	9%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	13%												
Q2	12%												
Q3	7%												
Q4	9%												
Heated water services	4	- Insufficient separation from electrical services. - Solar hot water copper pipework not lagged in ceiling space.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>4%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>0%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	5%	Q2	5%	Q3	4%	Q4	0%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	5%												
Q2	5%												
Q3	4%												
Q4	0%												
Services Sanitary Drainage Systems	5	- Minimum required separation between Overflow Relief Gully (ORG) and the lowest fixture not met. - No concrete support under drainage bends and sewer drainage with incorrect fall.	 <table><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Prevalence</th></tr><tr><td>Q1</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>Q2</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>Q3</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>Q4</td><td>9%</td></tr></table>	Quarter	Prevalence	Q1	5%	Q2	8%	Q3	8%	Q4	9%
Quarter	Prevalence												
Q1	5%												
Q2	8%												
Q3	8%												
Q4	9%												

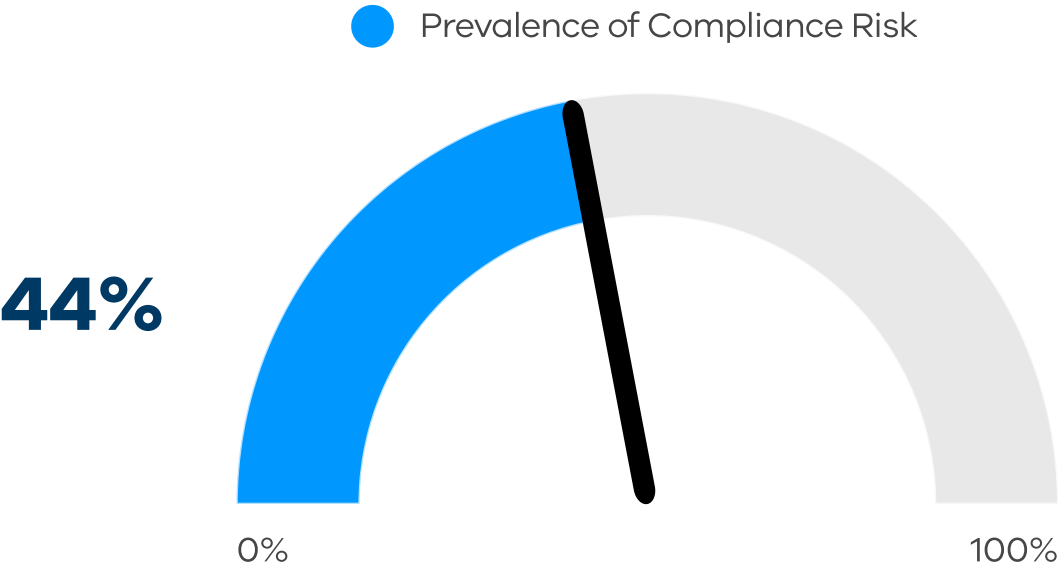
4.4. COMPLIANCE RISK PREVALENCE - SINGLE VS DUAL OCCUPANCY DWELLINGS

SINGLE OCCUPANCY

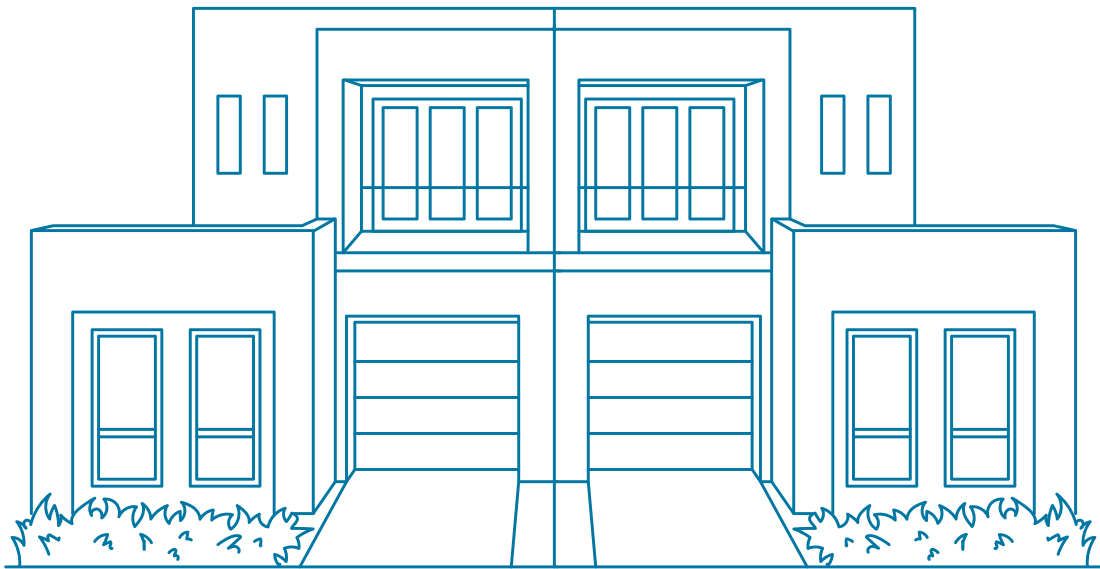


Common Plumbing Issues

- General gas installation
- Cold Water Services
- Sanitary Plumbing Systems
- Roof Drainage Systems
- Heated Water Services
- Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning Systems

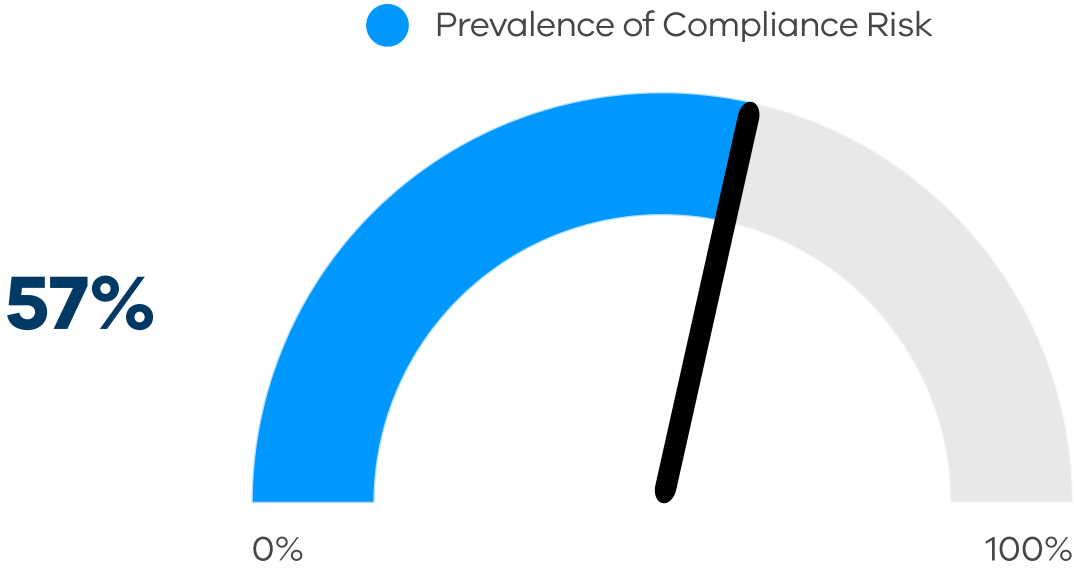


DUAL OCCUPANCY



Common Plumbing Issues

- Sanitary Plumbing Systems
- General gas installation
- Roof Drainage Systems
- Cold Water Services



4.5. PREVALENCE OF PLUMBING COMPLIANCE RISKS BY CLASS

Class	No. of sites inspected	% of compliance risks across class from all inspections	Areas of serious compliance risk for building
Domestic (Class 1 and 10)	835	35%	• General Gas Installation • Sanitary Plumbing Systems • Cold Water Services • Roof Drainage Systems • Sanitary Drainage Systems
Apartments ≥2 sole occupancy (Class 2 + mixed use) and group dwellings and hospitals (Classes 3, 4, 9a&c)	20	60%	• Sanitary Plumbing Systems • Cold Water Services • Heated Water Services • Roof Drainage Systems
Assembly building with no dwellings (Class 9b)	27	41%	• Roof Drainage Systems • Sanitary Plumbing Systems • Sanitary Drainage Systems
Office buildings and cafes, shops and markets with no dwellings (Classes 5, 6 + mixed use)	15	13%	• Roof Drainage Systems • Sanitary Plumbing Systems • Sanitary Drainage Systems
Warehouse and factories and car parks – no dwellings (Classes 7a, 7b, 8)	33	33%	• Roof Drainage Systems • Cold Water Services • Sanitary Plumbing Systems • Sanitary Drainage Systems

5. A CLOSER LOOK AT PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS OF SWIMMING POOLS PERMITS

In FY21-22, a total of 479 swimming pool inspections (under construction) were conducted across 41 municipalities in Victoria, involving 135 builders (including 21 dedicated swimming pool construction companies). Seventy-six or 16% of these inspections identified at least one compliance risk related to preventing access to swimming pools by young children.

A total of 118 non-compliant items were observed on these sites. The most common issue was a lack of temporary fencing (44%), around bodies of water greater than 300mm. The second most prevalent issue was inadequate temporary fencing (21%) with gaps greater than 100mm prevalent as well as minimum fence heights of 1200 not met.

In FY22-23 Q1, 86 swimming pool inspections were conducted and 32 or 27% of these inspections identified at least one compliance risk related to preventing access to swimming pools by young children.

The VBA deems the lack of adequate or no temporary fencing around bodies of water greater than 300mm as a serious risk and builders are contacted on the same day to address these issues within 24 hours.

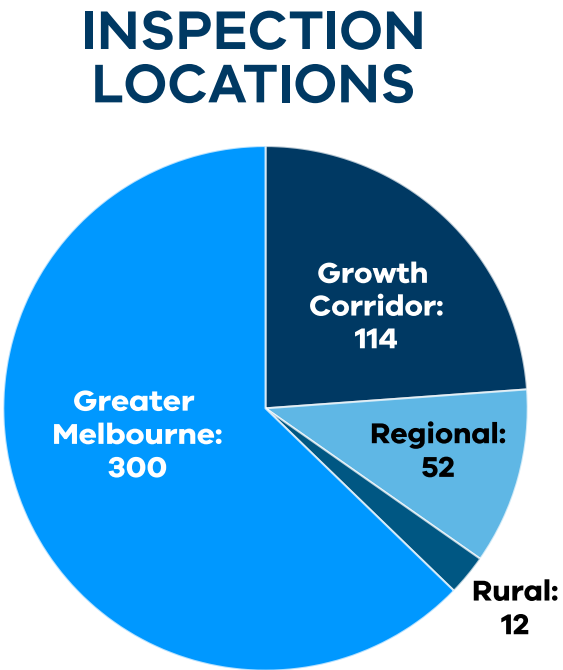
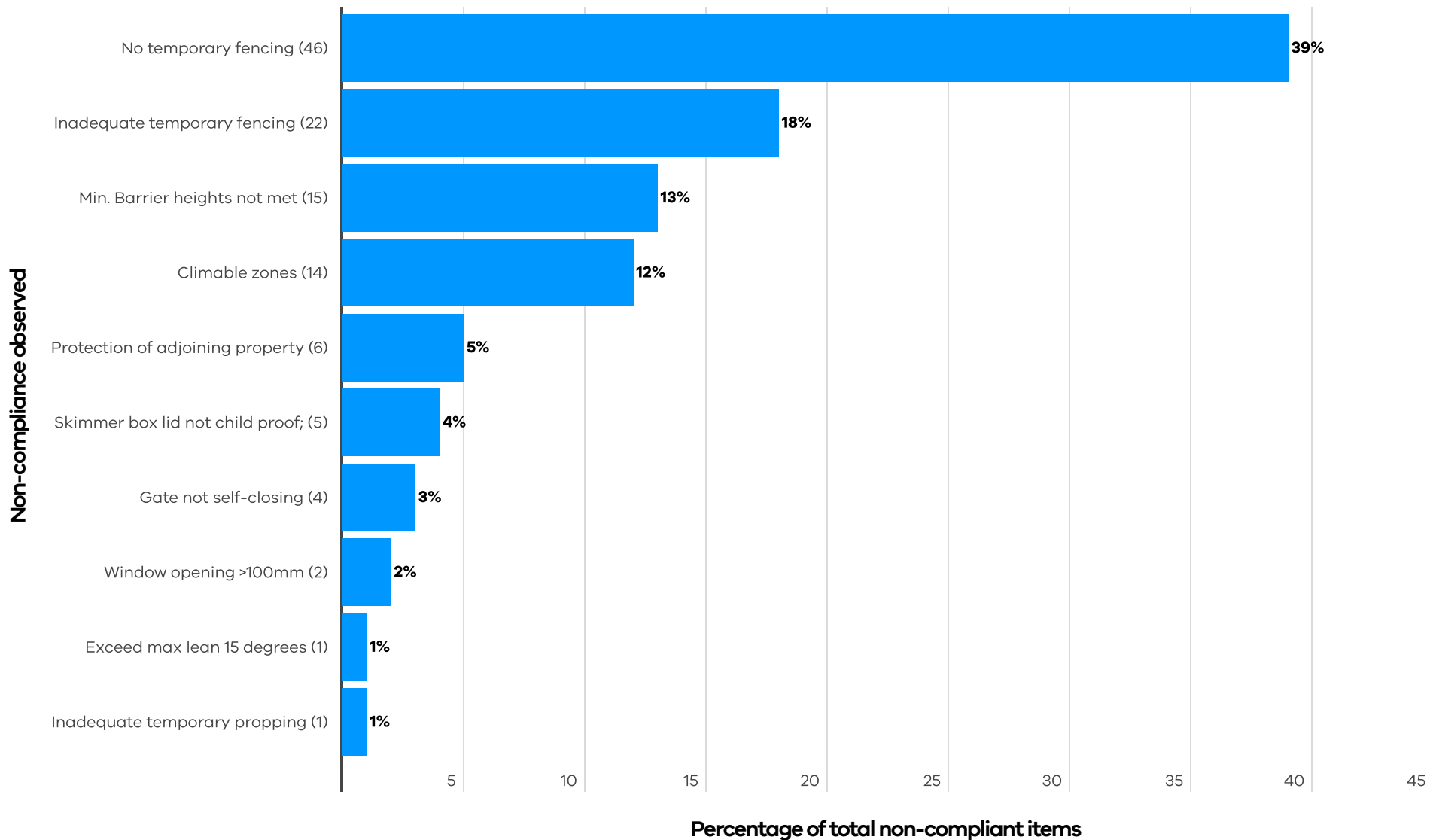
The VBA also conducts desktop audits of building surveyors’ work in approving the construction of swimming pools. The audits involve assessing Section 30 building permit documentation which building surveyors’ rely on to determine compliance of swimming pools and spas.

In FY21-22, 74 desktop audits were carried out on building permits for swimming pool barriers, issued by 30 unique building surveyors in 25 municipalities in Victoria.

The issues identified on site through the proactive inspections correlate with the items in the desktop audits that did not have sufficient information detailed on the plans to show compliance. The results of these audits can be found on the VBA’s website <https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/about/vba-reports>

A Practitioner Education webinar was also delivered in December 2022 focusing on the audit findings and ways to improve compliance. To watch this webinar, visit <https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/surveyors/Practitioner-Education-Series/previous-sessions>

NON-COMPLIANT ISSUES OBSERVED



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS PROGRAM - RISK RATING SCALE

The following table shows the PIP risk rating matrix.

The level of risk observed during inspection determines the VBA's response and any actions required of the relevant building practitioners.

LOW RISK (PASS)	Non-compliance is not identified at inspection, or any non-compliance is consistent with work in progress and is reasonably expected to be resolved as work progresses.
LOW RISK (LOW-IMPACT)	It is unlikely that the compliance risk, if left untreated, would cause an adverse effect on the safety and/or amenity of the occupants. Financial loss for future occupants or loss of structural integrity is unlikely.
MEDIUM RISK	It is possible that the compliance risk, if left untreated, would cause an adverse effect on safety and/or amenity of the occupants/public. Financial loss for future occupants or loss of structural integrity is possible.
HIGH RISK	It is almost certain that the compliance risk, if left untreated, would cause an adverse effect on the safety and/or amenity of the occupants/public. Structural integrity would be significantly compromised and/or total loss of project value would be incurred.

APPENDIX 2: PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS PROGRAM - ELECTRONIC CHECKLIST

SECTION ONE

Guidance on mandatory requirements under the Building Act 1993 and Building Regulations 2018

Building Regulation 2018 Provision and display of permit information (Regulation 41)

Building Act 1993 Part 3 Building Permits (Section 16 - works without a Building Permit or not in accordance with Building Permit, Section 24A- appropriate certificate of insurance issued for cost of building work >\$16,000 , Section 24B – Specification of builders in relation to specific building work, Section 25B – Restrictions on owner builders.

Building Act 1993 Part 5 Occupancy Permits

Building Regulation 2018 Part 5 Siting (Regulation 73 to 97 when applicable)

Building Regulation 2018 Part 7 Protection of adjoining property and public

Building Regulations 2018 Part 8 and Part 10 Building work and Designation of special areas of building work (Regulation 132, 150, 152, 153,154)

APPENDIX 2: PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS PROGRAM - ELECTRONIC CHECKLIST CONTINUED

SECTION TWO

Guidance on building work relevant to residential inspections and is broken down into different building stages under the National Construction Code of Australia BCA Vol 2 (class 1 and 10)

Site preparation Earthworks and Site cuts, site surface drainage and termite risk management

Footings and Slabs Preparation Concrete and Reinforcing, site classification, and footings and Slab construction

Masonry Unreinforced and reinforced, accessories, weatherproofing and earth wall construction

Framing Sub-floor ventilation, Timber/Steel Framing, Structural Steel members

Roof and Wall Cladding Roof cladding, Gutters and Down-pipes, Wall Cladding

Glazing

Fire Safety Separation, Smoke Alarms, Heating appliances, bushfire areas, Alpine Area

Health and Amenity Wet Area and External water

Safe movement and Access Stair Construction, Balustrading and Handrails, Swimming pool Safety Barriers, Swimming pool Water recirculation

Additional Construction High Wind, Earthquake and Flood Hazard

Structural Design

Energy Efficiency Building fabric, external glazing, Building Sealing, Air Movement

SECTION THREE

Guidance on building work relevant to commercial inspections and is broken down into different building stages under the National Construction Code of Australia BCA Vol 1 (class 2 to 9)

Section B: Structure

Section C: Fire Resistance Fire Resistance and Stability, Compartment and Separation, Protection of Openings

Section D: Access and Egress Provision of Escape, Construction of Exits, Access for People with Disability

Section E: Services and Equipment Fire Fighting Equipment, Smoke Hazard Management, Lift Installations, Emergency Lighting, Exit Signs and Warning Systems.

Section F: Services and Equipment Damp and Weatherproofing, Sanitary and Other Facilities, Room Heights, Light and Ventilation, Sound Transmission and Insulation.

Section G: Ancillary Provisions Minor Structure and Components, Heating Appliances, Fireplaces, Chimneys and Flues, Atrium Construction, Construction in Alpine Areas and Bush-Fire Prone Areas

Section H: Special Use Buildings Theatres, Stages and Public Halls, Public Transport Buildings

Section J: Energy Efficient Energy Efficient, Building Fabric, Glazing, Building Sealing, Air-Condition and Ventilation Systems, Artificial Lighting and Power, Heated Water Supply and Swimming Pool and Spa Plant, Access for Maintenance and Facilities Monitoring.

APPENDIX 2: PROACTIVE INSPECTIONS PROGRAM - ELECTRONIC CHECKLIST CONTINUED

SECTION FOUR

Guidance on requirements under the Plumbing Regulations 2018, NCC: Plumbing Code of Australia Volume 3 2019 Victorian section and relevant standards that apply to residential and commercial properties in the following categories.

Water Services (Section B of the NCC PCA Vol 3 2019 Vic and AS/NZS 3500:1:2018 and 3500:4:2018) - Cold Water Services, Heated Water Services, Non-Drinking Water Services, Firefighting Water Service

Sanitary plumbing and drainage systems (Section C of the NCC PCA Vol 3 2019 Vic and AS/NZS 3500:2:2018) - Sanitary Plumbing Systems and Sanitary Drainage Systems

Stormwater Drainage Systems (Section F of the NCC PCA Vol 3 2019 Vic and AS/NZS 3500:3:2018) - Roof Drainage Systems, Surface and Subsurface Drainage Systems

Heating, Ventilation and Air-conditioning (Section G of the NCC PCA Vol 3 2019 Vic)

On-Site Wastewater Systems (Section G of the NCC PCA Vol 3 2019 Vic and AS/NZS 3500:2:2018) - On-Site Wastewater Management Systems; On-Site Liquid Trade Waste Systems

Gas Installations as per AS/NZS 5601:1:201 General Gas Installation, Type A Servicing Work, Type A Conversion Work

Unlicensed plumber in the relevant field Unlicensed in: Drainage, Fire Protection, Gas fitting, Irrigation, mechanical, Roofing -Sanitary Water Supply

SECTION FIVE

Guidance on elements concerning immediate life-safety issues to ensure these items are inspected first.

OHS Practices at the site and hazards etc.

Scaffolding Makeshift working platforms, Guard Rails & Kick boards

Electrical Risk Exposed Live Electrical, Power leads & Power boards

Excavation Working in trenches over 1.5m Deep, site cut over 1.5m

Asbestos Debris or removal

Temporary Fencing Site entry is restricted or affecting public

Amenity and housekeeping at the site Rubbish control, materials storage and site toilets

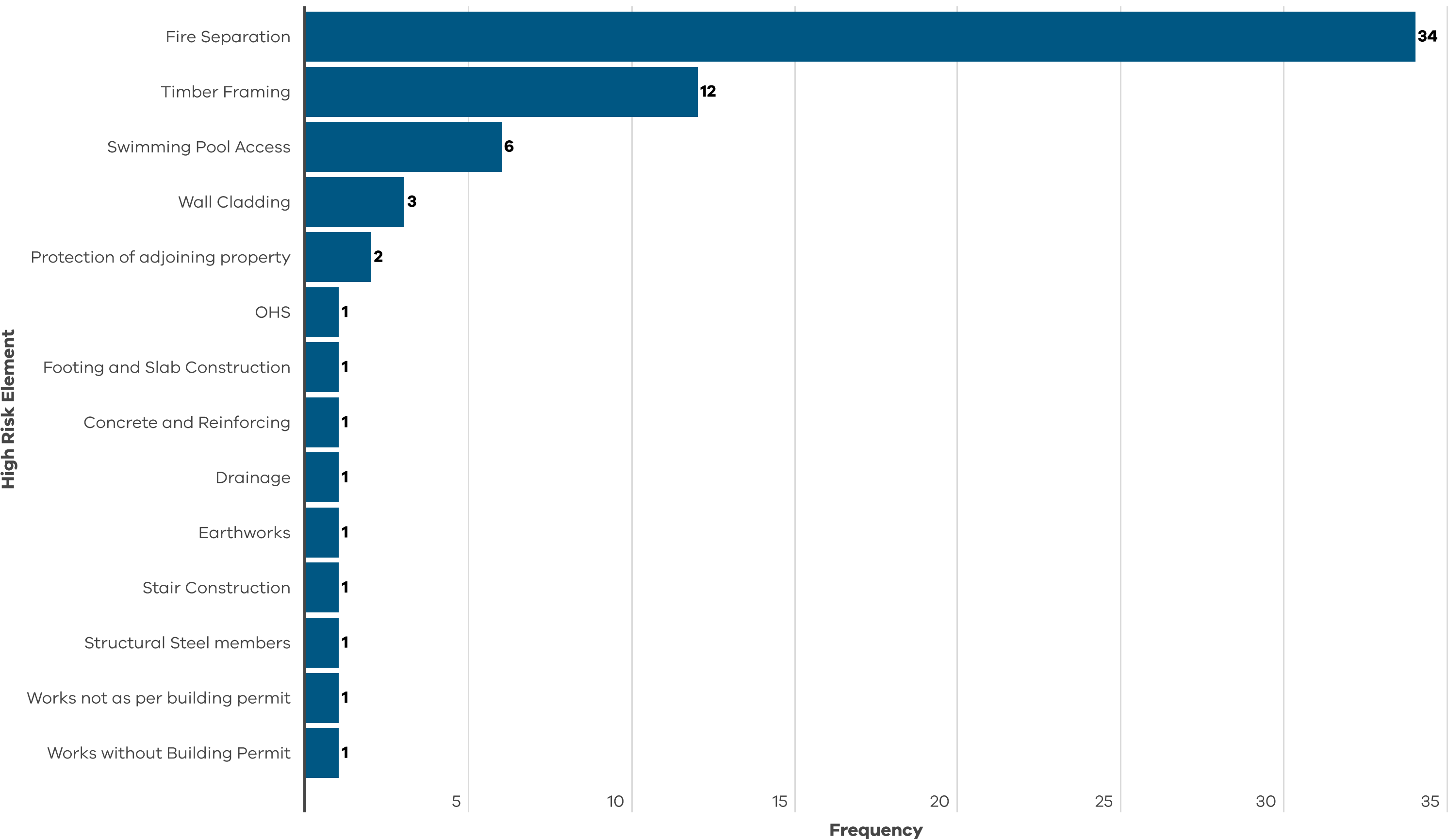
Fall risks Working over 2m in height (Opening in platforms/stair voids, Secured access ladders

Structure Stability Adequate temporary propping & bracing

COVIDSafe Requirements A separate checklist is used during COVID restrictions and covers adherence to mandatory COVIDsafe requirements; physical-distancing, mask wearing, worker limits, QR codes and evidence of a COVIDSafe plans.

IF THESE ITEMS PRESENT AN UNACCEPTABLE RISK, THE RELEVANT CO-REGULATORS ARE CONTACTED IMMEDIATELY BY THE BUILDING INSPECTOR.

APPENDIX 3: HIGH RISK INSPECTIONS - COMPOSITION OF HIGH COMPLIANCE RISK ELEMENTS FY22/23 Q1





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