

Support for municipal building control State Building Surveyor

The role of SBS in supporting Councils

The State Building Surveyor (SBS) holds a function under the *Building Act* (1993) to monitor council delivery of building control functions, and to provide councils with advice and support on the performance of those functions.

To deliver to this function, the Office of the SBS (OSBS) has launched an initiative to support councils' building control performance.

SBS support for council building control

This initiative will:

- Deliver effective and accessible tools to support councils' performance of building control activities, including municipal building control plans (MBCP). We are currently developing these in collaboration with the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group.
- Identify areas where the OSBS can support councils' building control performance (e.g. through knowledge and data sharing).
- Identify council activity associated with sound building control performance, particularly where this may be readily applied by other councils.
- Provide councils with the opportunity to influence the future of SBS monitoring, advice and supports.

About the building control pilot program

We will launch our MBCP within an early-release pilot program, which we anticipate operating from July 2025. We will ask pilot participants to:

- Use and provide feedback about our MBCP. We will use this feedback to validate and refine our approach, to ensure councils receive practical supports that can be applied effectively.
- Participate in brief interviews with the OSBS. We will ask for the time of CEOs, senior building control staff, and/or MBS.

About our MBCP

Our MBCP focuses on key building control activities in four areas:

1. Risk management
 - Identifying and consolidating existing council risk management activity
 - Providing guidance that strengthens councils' ability to anticipate and mitigate building control risks.
2. Data collection and reporting
 - Identifying and existing reporting on council building control functions.
 - Conducting a health check of current reporting practices.
 - Providing guidance on data collection and reporting to inform council forecasting of demands and activity.
3. Workforce planning and resourcing
 - Identifying and consolidating existing council workforce planning for both statutory and non-statutory building control functions.
 - Supporting council analysis of resourcing.
 - Providing a means for council to cross-reference staffing levels with workload and evaluate whether resourcing meets operational needs.
4. Enforcement and prosecution
 - Identifying and consolidating existing policies in exercising discretionary enforcement powers
 - Providing risk-based templates that guide councils on exercising discretionary powers, decision-making, and prioritisation of enforcement action.

Contact us to participate

For further information about this initiative, or to express your interest in participating, email us at Council.MBS.Support@vba.vic.gov.au.