



**Victorian  
Municipal Building  
Surveyors Group**<sup>INC</sup>  
Safety • Integrity • Advocacy



# **VMBSG Essential Safety Measures Training Day**

## **Program**

VMBSG Essential Safety Measures Training Day | Friday 25 July 2025 | Rydges Melbourne



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A close-up photograph showing a hand holding a silver pen, with a red fire extinguisher nozzle in the background. The nozzle has a pressure gauge with a red needle and the words 'FIRE EXTINGUISHER' and 'RECHARGE' visible. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a workshop or training environment.

# Welcome

On behalf of the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group (VMBSG), we warmly welcome you to our inaugural Essential Safety Measures (ESM) Training Day, held here at Rydges Melbourne on Friday 25 July 2025.

Today's program brings together professionals from across Victoria who are involved in fire safety, building compliance, maintenance, and regulation. Whether you're a surveyor, inspector, engineer, facilities manager, or compliance officer, this event is designed to provide practical, up-to-date insights into the evolving world of Essential Safety Measures.

This is one of VMBSG's most highly anticipated training events, and we're thrilled to see such strong interest and attendance. Your presence today reinforces the importance of collaboration and shared knowledge in maintaining safe, compliant, and resilient buildings across our communities.

We extend our sincere thanks to our valued event sponsors, whose generous support has made this day possible:

- **Gold Sponsor:** Q Compliance
- **Silver Sponsor:** DDEG
- **Bronze Sponsors:** Maddocks, Building Compliance Systems, United Building Consultants, and Smarterlite
- **Morning and Afternoon Tea Sponsors:** Weir Legal & Consulting and BSGM Essential Safety Measures

Their commitment to professional development and building safety helps us deliver meaningful learning opportunities like this one.

We hope you find today's sessions engaging, informative, and valuable in your ongoing work. Thank you for being part of the conversation.

— VMBSG Committee

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

# Agenda

## VMBSG Essential Safety Training Day

MC: Peter Jolly, VMBSG President

<b>8.30am</b>	Registration
<b>9am</b>	Welcome: Peter Jolly, President VMBSG Inc.
	Gold Sponsor Presentation - Q Compliance
	<b>Neumann Ashkar, Neumann Projects Australia</b> <i>"AS1851 Requirements &amp; Baseline Data: Interpreting and applying this critical Australian Standard"</i>
	<b>Greg Aspinall, Aspinall Fire Service Testing</b> <i>"Fire hydrant &amp; fire hose reel compliance"</i>
	<b>Will Mackie, Nicolas Building Surveyors</b> <i>"How do we reduce ESM erosion to achieve better building stock?"</i>
	Silver Sponsor Presentation - DDEG
	<b>Bronwyn Weir, Weir Legal and Consulting</b> <i>"Regulatory Issues and Possibilities for Reform"</i>
<b>10.45am</b>	Morning Tea (sponsor: Weir Legal & Consulting)
	<b>Bradley Trewavis, Commander, Building Safety Regulations Unit, FRV</b> <i>"Application process for A2G2 (consultation), Pre Reg 129, Reg 129 applications and Reg 187 process"</i>

# Agenda

	Bronze sponsor presentation – Building Compliance Systems
	<b>Greg Keighery and Sam Hillbrick, FRV</b> <i>"Fire Indicator Panels (FIP) – Detailed Functional Overview"</i>
	<b>Tara Schulz, Maddocks</b> <i>"Responsibilities, Actions, and Liabilities – How to Serve Requests for Documentation (Regulation 225)"</i>
<b>12.15pm</b>	Lunch
	Prize – Q Compliance competition
	<b>Mark Cusack, Q Compliance</b> <i>"Building fire integrity as a holistic view of passive fire protection"</i>
	Bronze sponsor presentation Maddocks Lawyers
	<b>James Cox, MBS City of Melbourne</b> <i>"ESM Enforcement – The role of the MBS, effective risk profiling, common issues and resolutions"</i>
	<b>Trent Ball, BSGM Essential Safety Measures</b> <i>"What to expect and when to involve the specialists"</i>
<b>2.40pm</b>	Afternoon tea (sponsored by BSGM Essential Safety Measures)
	Bronze sponsor presentation - Smarterlite
	<b>Vujan Krunic, Maddocks</b> <i>"Maintenance Determinations and Part 15 overview"</i>

# Agenda

	<b>Paul Horton, FRV</b> <i>"Fire Safety: A holistic collaboration"</i>
	Bronze sponsor presentation - United Building Consultants
	<b>Dr Weng Poh, Building Plumbing Commission</b> <i>"ESM maintenance and compliance requirements"</i>
	<b>Panel: "Where ESM Maintenance Falls Short – and How We Close the Gap"</b>
<b>4.50pm</b>	<b>Peter Jolly</b> Training Day close
<b>5.30pm</b>	Sundowner drinks in the Bossley Bar



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### **Q Compliance: Fire Safety Expertise with a Personal Touch**

Founded in 2016, Q Compliance Pty Ltd is a Melbourne-based, family-owned consultancy delivering expert building compliance and fire safety solutions across Victoria. Specialising in Essential Safety Measures (ESM), passive fire protection, evacuation planning, building notice consultation, and compliance for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA), the company has quickly become a trusted partner to clients across commercial, industrial, and residential sectors.

Under the leadership of Director Mark Cusack, who brings over 19 years of experience in the fire safety and compliance sector, Q Compliance has earned a reputation for professionalism, responsiveness, and reliability. The team combines deep technical knowledge with a personalised, client-centric approach, tailoring solutions to each building's unique needs and risks.

Q Compliance's services include detailed ESM audits, asset life cycle management, routine inspections, and clear, actionable compliance reporting. Their mission is to ensure buildings remain safe and fully compliant with the Building Code of Australia and state-specific legislation - offering peace of mind to both owners and occupants.

The company's core values of integrity, reliability, and proactive service are reflected in its long-standing relationships with clients ranging from small businesses to local councils and government bodies. Q Compliance is committed not just to ticking boxes, but to enhancing real-world fire safety outcomes through education, transparency, and clear communication.

What sets Q Compliance apart is its practical, solution-focused mindset and its ability to demystify complex regulatory requirements. Whether supporting a one-off inspection or building a long-term compliance partnership, the team takes pride in being approachable, informed, and easy to work with.

Q Compliance continues to lead with professionalism and care, helping safeguard Victorian communities - one compliant, safe building at a time.

# Meet the Speakers - Keynote Speaker



## TOPIC

### **AS1851 REQUIREMENTS & BASELINE DATA: INTERPRETING AND APPLYING THIS CRITICAL AUSTRALIAN STANDARD**

This session offers a practical breakdown of AS1851-2012, the key standard governing routine servicing of fire protection systems. The presentation covers its structure, common misinterpretations, and overlooked sections - such as fire pumps, tanks, and special hazard systems. It highlights the importance of baseline data, like block plans and fire matrices, and outlines what inspectors should look for during site audits. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of how to assess compliance, identify systemic issues early, and ensure that maintenance reporting reflects actual work completed.



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

### **Neumann Ashkar**

#### **NEUMANN PROJECTS AUSTRALIA**

Neumann Ashkar is a highly experienced fire services specialist with over 42 years in the industry. He brings expertise in the full scope of design, documentation, commissioning, and certification of fire protection systems.

Renowned for his deep industry knowledge and longstanding dedication, Neumann remains at the forefront of fire safety by staying informed of current trends and actively engaging with fire protection networks across Australia. His experience is particularly strong in the integration of fire services with other building systems, and he offers valuable insights through audits, reviews, and inspections - including comprehensive Essential Safety Measures (ESM) reviews.

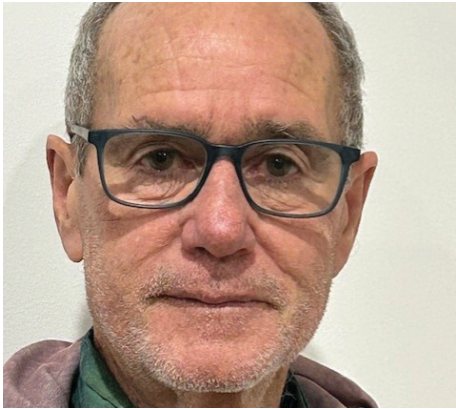
Neumann possesses a detailed understanding of fire services design and compliance, encompassing client requirements, building codes and standards (both Australian and international), system concept development, and technical documentation.

His project portfolio is extensive and includes key contributions to a number of major developments, such as:

- New Footscray Hospital (Certification)
- Commonwealth Law Courts – matrix review and testing
- Royal Children's Hospital, Parkville (Certification)
- ANZ Head Office, Docklands (Certification)
- Victorian Desalination Plant
- Telstra Exchanges and fire safety upgrades
- New Bendigo Hospital



# Meet the Speakers



## Greg Aspinall

### Aspinall Fire Service Testing

Greg Aspinall is the Director of AFST and a long-standing advocate for improved fire system testing standards in Australia. His fire services career began with hydraulic consultancy Peter Thompson & Associates, whose active involvement in the development of AS 2419.1 and AS 2441 helped shape Greg's early industry perspective.

Following the 1994 release of AS 2419.1, Greg recognised significant gaps in testing practices and committed to aligning his work with the Standard, identifying widespread system failures and industry misunderstandings.

In response, he collaborated with the Building Control Commission, fire brigades, and key experts to help develop **Practice Note 38** - a milestone in fire hydrant testing guidance. Greg founded AFST in 1990 and has since remained at the forefront of industry practice.

He served on the **FP-009 Committee** for fire hydrant standards from 2008 until his retirement from the committee in 2022.

### **Topic: Fire hydrant & fire hose reel compliance**

This session will explore how to recognise a quality pressure test report and ensure results are clearly presented for ease of understanding. It will highlight the alignment between commissioning and ongoing maintenance testing, and the importance of comparing periodic test results with original commissioning data to assess system performance over time.

The session will also cover the role of commissioning reports - kept onsite for the life of the system - and the need for them to be easily referenced alongside ongoing maintenance records.

Additional discussion will include pump performance compliance testing, common issues arising from imported systems, and a comparison of pressure requirements between Victoria, other states and territories, and NSW - and what these differences mean for practitioners.



Fire Service Consulting & Testing

# Meet the Speakers



## Will Mackie

### Nicolas Building Surveyors - Senior Associate

Will's career involves over a decade experience in the construction industry. Currently a Senior Associate at Nicholas Building Surveyors, Will provides a strategic lead in major projects and is pivotal to technical and management direction. He has a strong technical background in both Construction & Fire Safety Engineering. Will has worked on high-end residential, commercial, industrial, and healthcare projects, including The Walk Hotel/Retail, Crown Casino, National Gallery of Victoria Events, Melbourne University and Freshwater Place.

He holds an Unlimited Level 1 Building Surveying License with the VBA/BPC, Bachelor in Building Surveying, a Bachelor of Applied Science (Construction Management) (Honours), a Graduate Certificate in Performance-Based Building & Fire Codes, and a Diploma in Building & Construction. Will's extensive experience and advanced education make him a respected professional in the construction compliance field.



**NICOLAS**  
BUILDING SURVEYORS

### **Topic: How do we reduce ESM erosion to achieve better building stock?**

The presentation will focus on the following elements:

1. Presentation of fire mode function for two sites (with video presentation. Fire mode testing is a benchmark to "ESM Health"):

  - Pre-handover of new building at the "Walk" development located on Bourke Street Mall which is recently completed
  - Post-handover of existing building located at 557 Little Lonsdale Street which is a 20 storey residential building comprising single stair

Discussion of these two sites will centre around the type of testing undertaken and elements being reviewed for validation back to the fire engineering design intent.

2. Education (includes education of FM's and contractors – ties into discussion on item 1 above)
3. Baseline data which includes fire matrix development, sequence testing in fire mode, building manual
4. Private and Council sectors working together
5. Legislative change
6. Accountability (rests predominantly insurance industry, service industry, and State/FM industry. Indirectly, Building Surveyors also have an obligation to raise the bar in relation to how a building is handed over with greater expectations of consultants/contractors being applied

# Meet the Speakers

## Bronwyn Weir

### Weir Legal and Consulting

Bronwyn Weir is Managing Director of Weir Legal & Consulting – Bronwyn has advised local government building departments and the Victorian Government on all areas of building regulation for over 27 years.

Recent work includes the review of the VBA's complaints and investigations practices, acting on over 100 BAB matters relating to the retention of combustible cladding, a review for CSV on fire safety engineers, acting for the MBS at Buloke in relation POPE permits and the Esoteric Festival, acting for the MBS at Mornington Peninsula in relation to the McCrae landslides.

Bronwyn also regularly advises other Australian governments on building regulatory matters which most recently has included a review of home building insurance, new accountability legislation for developers and proposed reforms to improve building product regulation.



### ***Topic: Regulatory Issues and Possibilities for Reform***

Bronwyn will take us through the key shortcomings in the regulation of ESMs touching on how the Victoria's regime differs from other Australian jurisdictions. She will highlight possible areas for reform. Issues for discussion will include:

- ESM commissioning;
- ESM maintenance schedules and OPs for older buildings;
- Registration/licensing of maintenance contractors
- Annual ESM Reports
- Council and fire authority roles
- The role of owners and owners corporation managers



# Meet the Speakers



## Bradley Trewavis

### Commander, Building Safety Regulations Unit, FRV

Bradley Trewavis is a Commander within Fire Rescue Victoria, leading the Building Safety Regulations team. He oversees the implementation and enforcement of fire safety standards in buildings, ensuring compliance to protect both the public and firefighters. With a strong leadership role, Brad is committed to maintaining rigorous fire safety measures and advancing regulatory excellence across Victoria.

### **Topic: Application process for A2G2 (consultation), Pre Reg 129, Reg 129 applications and Reg 187 process**

Fire Rescue Victoria provide broad emergency management for the Victorian community. This includes prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

To assist the community to build resilience and mitigate against emergencies, The FRV Building Safety Regulation units sits within the community safety space to manage FRV's legislative responsibilities and assist the construction industry and regulators to comply with fire safety regulations.

Building Safety Regulation provide a range of services to provide consent and report in line with the Building Regulations. To better prepare industry through the process, this presentation will describe the services and regulation to help streamline the regulatory process.





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## DDEG

**DDEG (Dynamic Design Engineering Group)** is a multidisciplinary engineering consultancy delivering innovative, efficient, and practical solutions across the building services, infrastructure, and industrial sectors. With a strong focus on collaboration and technical excellence, DDEG supports clients through every stage of the project lifecycle - from early concept design through to construction, commissioning, and ongoing operational support.

Founded on a commitment to providing value-driven outcomes, DDEG works closely with architects, developers, builders, and facility managers to deliver integrated engineering solutions that are tailored to project needs.

Their services span across mechanical, electrical, fire protection, hydraulic, and sustainability engineering, ensuring all aspects of building performance and compliance are considered.

With a client-focused approach, DDEG brings together technical expertise and industry knowledge to manage challenges with a practical mindset. Whether working on commercial, education, healthcare, residential, retail, or industrial projects, the team is known for its hands-on service, attention to detail, and ability to navigate complex building regulations.

A key differentiator for DDEG is their commitment to sustainability and future-ready design. The team prioritises efficient systems and environmentally responsible practices, helping clients meet energy, compliance, and operational targets while delivering spaces that perform and endure.

Backed by a growing portfolio of successful projects across Australia, DDEG continues to build strong, long-term relationships with clients and project partners. With a reputation for responsiveness, reliability, and professional integrity, DDEG is a trusted name in engineering design and consulting.



# Meet the Speakers



## Greg Keighery

### Fire Rescue Victoria

Greg Keighery AFSM is an Acting Station Officer with Fire Rescue Victoria, currently serving in the Building Inspection and Compliance Unit. Beginning his career with the former MFB in 1989, Acting Station Officer Keighery has demonstrated exceptional commitment to firefighter and public fire safety - particularly through his long-term work improving fire safety systems at Melbourne's iconic Flinders Street Station.

He is highly regarded for leading the implementation of Safety Culture (iAuditor), a cloud-based system that has transformed FRV's building inspection reporting through standardised templates and improved compliance management. His efforts have also driven the rollout of FRV's electronic patient care record (E-PCR) system, streamlining medical reporting and enhancing collaboration with Ambulance Victoria. Beyond FRV, Greg has generously shared his expertise to support the adoption of iAuditor by fire services across Australia and Victorian councils, including the City of Melbourne and Yarra City Council.

### **Topic: Fire Indicator Panels (FIP) – Detailed Functional Overview**

This session offers a practical and in-depth overview of Fire Indicator Panels (FIPs) from a Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) perspective. The presentation explores the critical role FIPs play as an information hub for emergency response teams, detailing their key functions including continuous monitoring, alarm activation, notification systems, and ancillary controls.

Participants will gain insights into the operational importance of FIPs during emergency responses - particularly the need for accurate block plans and up-to-date system configurations. The session also outlines relevant Australian Standards (AS 1670, AS 2118, and AS 2419), explains how FRV uses FIP data to make real-time decisions, and highlights broader compliance considerations linked to Essential Safety Measures (ESM).

Emphasis is placed on collaboration with local government, regulatory processes, and the need for consistent system maintenance to safeguard both occupants and first responders.

# Meet the Speakers



## Sam Hillbrick

### Fire Rescue Victoria

Sam has served with Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) for 11 years and is currently an Acting Senior Station Officer within the Building Inspection and Compliance Unit (BICU). Over the past three years in his role as a Fire Safety Inspector (FSI), Sam has worked closely with a wide range of external stakeholders, further developing his expertise in Essential Safety Measures (ESM) compliance.

He is passionate about driving continuous improvement within FRV and enhancing the organisation's role in strengthening fire safety across the built environment.

### **Topic: Fire Indicator Panels (FIP) – Detailed Functional Overview**

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Emphasis is placed on collaboration with local government, regulatory processes, and the need for consistent system maintenance to safeguard both occupants and first responders.

# Meet the Speakers

## Tara Schulz

### Maddocks - Senior Associate

Tara is a Senior Associate in Maddocks' Public Law practice who leads the Compliance & Enforcement practice at Maddocks. She regularly provides advice on prosecution and enforcement actions, statutory powers and government investigations, and manages a variety of prosecution and enforcement matters for local, state and federal government clients; frequently appearing in Victorian courts and tribunals of all levels.

Having previously worked for the Office of Public Prosecutions (VIC) and the Australian Federal Police, Tara provides clients with nuanced, pragmatic and expert advice on criminal and civil enforcement. She is regarded as an expert in compliance and enforcement and is often engaged to speak at industry events, most recently participating as a panel member at the 2024 Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group conference and making a plenary presentation on Sovereign Citizens at the 2024 EHPA Symposium.



### ***Topic: Responsibilities, Actions, and Liabilities – How to Serve Requests for Documentation (Regulation 225)***

Tara will present on the legal and practical obligations on a Municipal Building Surveyor (or their delegate) when making a request to inspect documents pursuant to Regulations 225 of the Building Regulations 2018.

The presentation will cover how to request documents, what can be requested, and the mechanisms for enforcing a failure to comply with the request.



Maddocks

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# Maddocks



### Maddocks

Maddocks is a leading Australian law firm with a strong reputation for delivering high-quality legal services to government, corporate, and commercial clients. With offices in Melbourne, Sydney, and Canberra, the firm supports clients across a range of sectors including property, construction, government, health, education, and infrastructure.

Known for its deep industry knowledge and practical legal advice, Maddocks works closely with clients to help them navigate complex regulatory environments, manage risk, and achieve strategic outcomes. The firm has particular expertise in planning and environment law, procurement, governance, workplace relations, and major projects.

Maddocks is widely recognised for its work with all levels of government, providing trusted legal guidance on policy implementation, legislative interpretation, and compliance. Its commitment to building strong, long-term relationships and delivering tailored legal solutions has made Maddocks a trusted advisor to some of Australia's most significant public and private organisations.

### Building Compliance Systems

Building Compliance Systems (BCS) is a specialist provider of cloud-based software solutions designed to simplify and streamline Essential Safety Measures (ESM) and building compliance management. Built by industry professionals for industry professionals, BCS offers a practical, user-friendly platform that enables building owners, managers, contractors, and consultants to manage their compliance obligations efficiently and with confidence.

The BCS platform provides real-time access to critical building information, automates routine processes, and ensures accurate record-keeping in line with regulatory requirements. With tools for inspections, maintenance tracking, document storage, and reporting, it supports proactive compliance and helps reduce risk across property portfolios.

BCS is trusted by a wide range of clients - from local governments and facility managers to compliance auditors and fire safety contractors. Their mission is to empower users with the tools and insights they need to maintain safe, compliant buildings, while improving transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency.



# Meet the Speakers



## Mark Cusack

### Q Compliance

Mark Cusack is the Director and founder of Q Compliance, bringing over 19 years of experience as an Essential Safety Measures (ESM) specialist. Since establishing Q Compliance in 2016, Mark has been dedicated to helping clients meet their fire safety and compliance obligations across a range of building types.

He holds a Diploma of Fire Technology from Swinburne University and a Certificate III in Asset Management. Based on the Mornington Peninsula, Mark is a proud husband and father of two daughters. Outside of work, he enjoys perfecting his lawn and collecting rare bottles of wine.

### ***Topic: Building fire integrity as a holistic view of passive fire protection***

Presented by Q Compliance, this session explores the critical role of Building Fire Integrity in achieving and maintaining Essential Safety Measures (ESM) compliance.

Covering key elements such as passive fire systems, regulatory frameworks, material standards, and early planning, the presentation highlights best practices across design, construction, and maintenance phases.

Real-world examples showcase common compliance pitfalls and the importance of proper documentation, inspections, and collaboration.

Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of how to build safer, more compliant structures through proactive fire safety planning.





# Meet the Speakers



## James Cox

### MBS City of Melbourne

James Cox is the current Municipal Building Surveyor for the City of Melbourne. With extensive experience across both public and private sectors, James Cox has worked in the private building surveying industry with a focus on Class 2–9 buildings, and held senior roles at the Victorian Building Authority, including as a Senior Technical Advisor and Registrar to the Building Appeals Board. James Cox is a current member of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee and serves on the committee of the Victorian Municipal Building Surveyors Group, contributing to policy and regulatory reform across the sector.

### ***Topic: ESM Enforcement – The role of the MBS, effective risk profiling, common issues and resolutions***

This presentation explores the role of the Municipal Building Surveyor in regulating Essential Safety Measures (ESMs), with a focus on risk-based approaches to compliance.

It will cover methods for triaging referrals and complaints by assessing occupancy type and ESM risk, as well as the benefits of proactive inspections in high-risk buildings.

Common ESM issues and appropriate enforcement pathways will also be discussed, with an emphasis on targeting resources effectively to improve occupant safety.



**CITY OF MELBOURNE**

# Meet the Speakers

## Trent Ball

### BSGM Essential Safety Measures

Trent Ball is an accomplished building compliance audit director with over 10 years of experience in essential safety measures and building compliance management. As Director at BSGM Essential Safety Measures, Trent leads compliance audits, regulatory enforcement resolution, and maintenance schedule development for a diverse client base across government, commercial, and residential sectors.

With a Bachelor of Business from RMIT and a strong background in accounting, information systems, and business management, Trent delivers practical, reliable compliance solutions that help clients proactively manage building risk.

He is passionate about sharing his expertise through industry training and is recognised for his clear, actionable approach to complex regulatory requirements, making him a trusted advisor in the field.



### ***Topic: What to expect and when to involve the specialists***

Join Trent Ball, Director at BSGM Essential Safety Measures, for a high-level session exploring what to check - and when to engage specialists - in Essential Safety Measures (ESM) compliance.

This presentation will demystify the process of achieving an Annual Essential Safety Measures Report (AESMR), highlight common compliance challenges, and offer a practical decision-making framework to help determine when specialist input is required.



# Meet the Speakers

## Vujan Kronic

### Maddocks - Senior Associate

Vujan specialises in building regulation and policy, advising State and Local government clients, boards, statutory authorities and private clients. He represents clients in the Building Appeals Board, Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, the Magistrates' Court and the Supreme Court of Victoria.

Vujan has specialist knowledge of the Victorian building regulatory framework, including plumbing, engineering, architectural and electrical laws, as well as national building laws. He works with all levels of government, regulatory authorities and private clients in dispute resolution, litigation, appeals and reviews.



### **Topic: Maintenance Determinations and Part 15 overview**

Vujan will look at the maintenance provisions in Part 15 of the Building Regulations 2018, focusing in particular on the way the essential safety measure maintenance requirements interact with certain building works.

The session will also briefly touch on the exposure draft of the Building Amendment (Building Manuals and Mandatory Inspections) Regulations 2025 and how those amendments might impact ESM maintenance.



Maddocks

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### United Building Consultants

United Building Consultants is a trusted and experienced team of Registered Building Surveyors and Inspectors delivering expert consultancy services across all classes of building developments. Based in Victoria, the firm supports a wide range of clients - from architects and developers to builders and property owners - providing end-to-end guidance on building permits, compliance, inspections, and certification.

With a strong focus on service, clarity, and regulatory expertise, United Building Consultants is committed to helping clients navigate the complexities of building regulations, ensuring projects meet all statutory obligations while maintaining design intent and construction efficiency. Their team is known for its responsive communication, practical advice, and ability to work collaboratively across disciplines and project scales.

Offering services from initial design stage to project completion, United Building Consultants ensures safe, compliant, and timely building outcomes. Their experience spans residential, commercial, industrial, and public sector projects, making them a reliable partner in today's ever-evolving construction landscape.



### Smarterlite

Smarterlite is an Australian innovation and manufacturing company leading the way in photoluminescent technology to enhance safety, sustainability, and compliance across public infrastructure and the built environment. Their groundbreaking products use non-toxic, energy-free photoluminescent materials to deliver high-visibility safety solutions - including emergency egress systems, wayfinding signage, and road and tunnel markers - that remain illuminated in the dark without electricity.

With a focus on reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions, Smarterlite's solutions are not only environmentally responsible but also highly durable, cost-effective, and compliant with national and international safety standards. Their systems are trusted by transport authorities, building owners, and facility managers for critical applications where visibility and safety are paramount.

Proudly designed and manufactured in Australia, Smarterlite continues to collaborate with government, industry, and research partners to push the boundaries of sustainable safety innovation - creating safer, smarter environments in buildings, tunnels, transport systems, and more.



# Meet the Speakers

## Paul Horton

### Commander, Fire Rescue Victoria

Paul commenced his fire service career in 1987 and now leads the Building Inspection and Compliance Unit (BICU) at Fire Rescue Victoria as Commander. With nearly 38 years of experience, he has worked across metropolitan and regional Victoria, gaining expertise in critical infrastructure, emergency management, and fire safety compliance.

He is a Graduate of the Institute of Fire Engineers, a life member of the CFA, and a committed Rotarian. Paul has received commendations for rescues and his work in Victoria's Alpine areas. He lives on the Mornington Peninsula with his wife Amy and enjoys travelling with their two adult children.



### **Topic: "Fire Safety": A holistic collaboration**

This presentation highlights the growing collaboration between Fire Rescue Victoria and Local Government Building Departments to improve fire safety outcomes. By sharing 227e reports directly with Municipal Building Surveyors, the process aims to close the loop on risk identification and resolution.

With a focus on Essential Safety Measures inspections across Class 2–9 buildings, the session also outlines how engaging council leadership is helping drive better compliance and safer communities.



# Meet the Speakers



## Dr Weng Poh

### Principal Fire Safety Engineer at the Building and Plumbing Commission (BPC)

Dr Weng Poh is the Principal Fire Safety Engineer at the Building and Plumbing Commission (BPC). He is also the Immediate Past National President of the Society of Fire Safety, Engineers Australia.

Weng started his involvement in fire engineering at BHP Research in the 1980's when much of the pioneering fire testing and research was conducted in Australia. He was also extensively involved in Fire Code Reform Centre Projects in the 1990's when performance-based design method in Australia was first developed. Weng has been closely involved in the development of methodology for fire safety designs of buildings and has published extensively in journals and conference papers.

He has been the leader of the fire engineering team within a major building services consultancy firm in Australia for almost 2 decades, Weng has a wide range

of experience in formulating practical, cost-effective fire engineering solutions for various types of buildings. These include sports, healthcare, scientific, research, retail, residential, commercial and industrial buildings.

Weng has continued his active involvement in fire engineering teaching and research. Weng is one of the lecturers of the post-graduate fire engineering courses at Victoria University. Many of the current Fire Safety Engineers have studied under him.

Weng is proud to be a co-recipient of the prestigious RW Chapman Medal from the Institution of Engineers Australia for his contributions to fire engineering. He also received A R Ahern Award for a paper on tenability in building fires he published in the AIRAH journal. He is also listed in Marquis Who's Who in the World.

### ***Topic: ESM maintenance and compliance requirements***

Dr Poh will speak about the following:

- ESM maintenance requirements
- Compliance management
- Data and documentation
- Building Manual



## Meet the Speakers



### Glenn Talbot

#### Verified - Managing Director

Glenn Talbot is the founder and Managing Director of Verified, a technology company established over 20 years ago, that provides building compliance, contractor management, OH&S safety verification and visitor management for in excess of 14,000 sites nationally.

He has been General Manager of some of Australia's leading service providers, has managed manufacturing facilities in Australia and New Zealand, and been responsible for national and international product distribution.

Technically he holds an Associate Diploma in Applied Science and remains as an Independent Chair for Australian Standards, Chairing committee FP-001, the committee responsible for the development of AS 1851 "Maintenance of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment". He has been a volunteer Board member and President of a successful not for-profit industry association.



# Meet the Panel



## Brett Turner

### Moderator

Brett Turner has been involved in the Building Surveying industry since the early 1980s, gaining experience in both private and Local Government roles. He's a former President of the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors (AIBS) Vic Chapter, where he served on the executive for over 13 years and earned the title of Fellow of the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors.

Brett is also a dedicated committee member of the VMBSG and held a long-standing position as Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS) at the City of Casey. Currently, he serves as the MBS at Bayside City Council and is looking forward to retirement in the next five years – but still has plenty of passion for the industry!

### PANEL TOPIC:

## Where ESM Maintenance Falls Short – and How We Close the Gap

*The panel will explore the current shortcomings in Essential Safety Measures (ESM) maintenance across the industry. Through open discussion, we'll examine the root causes of non-compliance, inconsistent practices, and knowledge gaps - and challenge why these issues persist.*

*Most importantly, the panel will focus on practical solutions: what needs to change, who needs to act, and how we can improve outcomes for building owners, regulators, and occupants alike.*

## Panel Speakers:

- Glenn Talbot
- Paul Horton
- Trent Ball
- Neumann Ashkar
- James Cox

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