

## Information Bulletin 1 –

May 2020

### Changes in response to the COVID-19 restrictions

The Building Appeals Board (**'the Board'**), established under s 166(1) of the *Building Act 1993* (**'the Act'**) to hear and determine matters brought under Part 10 of the Act, remains fully operational despite the recent COVID-19 restrictions.

The Board is mandated to proceed with as much expedition as the requirements of the Act and the *Building Regulations 2018* (**'the Regulations'**) and the proper consideration of the matter before it permit. Since the introduction of the government restrictions in response to COVID-19, the Board has continued to deliver on this mandate by rapidly transitioning to remote hearings and the provision of registry services remotely.

Since early March 2020, all hearings and mediations are being conducted either through the Zoom © audio-conferencing platform or 'on the papers' if appropriate. No face-to-face hearings (including face-to-face directions hearings) will be listed until further notice.

Practitioners are reminded that further guidance as to the Board's operations are published on its website and in its practice notes. *Practice Note 6 of 2020* (PN6) – *General procedure for conducting electronic hearings (e-hearings)* is able to be downloaded from the following link.

[https://www.buildingappeals.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/110672/BAB-Practice-Note-6-2020.pdf](https://www.buildingappeals.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/110672/BAB-Practice-Note-6-2020.pdf)

The key points set out in PN-6 are:

- Ensure that you have a suitable device;
- Ensure that you have been provided with a link or password to join the E-hearing;
- Test your device to ensure that its camera and microphone work with Zoom ©;
- Ensure that all documents to be relied upon have been electronically filed and are in PDF format;
- If your witness is connecting from a different location and/or device, ensure that your witness has been provided with a copy of PN-6.

All filings with the Board are accepted electronically including subpoenaed documents and the Board's registry continues to provide high-levels of assistance to the parties including regular and frequent communications by email, telephone and live-chat services via the Board's website.

For more information on the Board and its jurisdiction you may visit its website at [www.buildingappeals.vic.gov.au](http://www.buildingappeals.vic.gov.au) or send an email to [registry@buildingappeals.vic.gov.au](mailto:registry@buildingappeals.vic.gov.au).