

Media Release

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Culture of Compliance Research Report

The ARBV's report on "Strengthening Compliance Culture in the Architecture Sector" has been released. The report highlights the critical role of compliance culture within the architecture profession, explaining why it matters, what it looks like in practice, and how it can be strengthened.

About the report, Bronwyn Weir, Director Weir Legal and Consulting and Co-author of the Building Confidence Report states "Now has never been a more important time for architects to reflect on and explore the culture of their profession."

"Not only does the report provide an opportunity for self-reflection, it also offers the ARBV thoughtful guidance on its role as the regulator of the profession of architects. The report articulates the dual roles of the regulator - to bring accountability to those who are non-compliant whilst also promoting examples of strong compliance culture to provide a benchmark for what "good" looks like for others to aspire to."

Architects are professionals and, as such, are held to high standards by their clients, the public and professional peers. Underlying their professional status is a set of seven overarching duties, which are reflected in the regulatory framework, and are summarised in the report. These duties transcend architects' detailed compliance obligations, apply universally to all architects, and go to the very heart of what it means to be a professional. They also underpin a strong compliance culture.

The report draws on insights from architects, industry leaders, regulators, educators, and insurers to evaluate compliance culture within the Victorian architecture sector. Evidence suggests that, while many architects are aware of their professional responsibilities and are committed to compliance, this can be undermined by regulatory complexity, commercial pressures, and contractual arrangements and associated risks.

To address these challenges, the report outlines strategies that can be implemented by sole practitioners, small firms and large firms to help them discharge their duties and strengthen compliance culture. It additionally calls on all participants in the broader construction sector to work collectively and collaboratively to improve compliance culture across the sector, with architects encouraged to lead by example. This will help to drive positive behavioural change, raise standards and ensure that buildings are compliant, safe and high-quality.

The report is accompanied by a high-level summary and booklet containing practical guidance to support architects and architectural firms to strengthen compliance culture.

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