



Media release

The Hon Matthew Guy MLC

Minister for Planning

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\$1 million VCAT blitz to reduce planning delays

The Victorian Coalition Government has committed \$1 million to tackle the backlog of planning cases before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Announcing the initiative today, Planning Minister Matthew Guy said the funding would enable approximately 800 cases to be finalised and reduce the waiting list by up to six months.

“This funding will significantly reduce delays in the planning process and ease the burden on the development sector, local councils and the community as a whole.

“For those applications where projects are approved by VCAT, the result will be a boost for jobs and the construction industry at precisely the time we are looking for continued economic activity here in Victoria,” Mr Guy said.

“Furthermore, a number of these outstanding cases directly affect Victorian families who have applications for dwellings and extensions in limbo. This funding will remove much of the stress and angst for these families, not to mention cost arising from delay and uncertainty.”

There have been big increases in the number of cases being lodged at VCAT in recent years. In 2010-11 alone VCAT received 3,775 cases, a 13 per cent increase from 2009-10, and a total value in excess of \$7 billion.

In the first six months of 2011-12 there has been a nine per cent increase in the number of cases.

As a result, there are currently 1,824 cases pending worth approximately \$3 billion dollars, while 197 cases which are ready to be heard face an eight month delay.

“Eighty per cent of cases currently on the Planning and Environment List have been waiting at least six months to be heard, and without today’s initiative were likely to wait a further six months before a hearing date was confirmed,” Mr Guy said.

Today’s initiative comes on top of the Coalition Government’s reinstatement of the Major Cases List at VCAT, for which the previous government provided no ongoing funding.

As part of the reform moves, Mr Guy will establish a working group comprising members of VCAT and departmental officers to review long term funding options and other possible reforms.

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