

Warning to shonky builders

WE share the concern that Victorian families should not be exposed to "rogue" building practitioners (*Herald Sun*, July 23, 24).

Since the Building Practitioners Board last year took over responsibility for domestic building practitioners previously registered with the Housing Guarantee Fund, we have been working to ensure that house builders are held to the same high standards of performance which apply to commercial building projects.

Unfortunately, problems with domestic building and renovation date back over many decades, and cannot be rectified overnight.

But the Building Control Commission is tackling the problem on three fronts:

ENCOURAGING practitioners to take pride in their status as registered builders and raising consumer awareness about the importance of ensuring that a chosen practitioner is registered, qualified and has insurance in the event of any claims needing to be made.

EXCLUDING any builder with a bad

record that can be substantiated, according to the records of the Office of Fair Trading and Business Affairs and/or the former Housing Guarantee funds.

WORKING with federal authorities to develop stringent new national registration and insurance requirements which will, over time, eliminate bad practitioners across the nation.

A small number of builders have already been denied registration on the basis of their lack of good character, and I have no doubt that others will follow in time.

All the examples in your coverage relate to work initiated under the old system.

There is no doubt the writing is on the wall for industry "shonks".

As the Building Practitioners Board and the Building Control Commission progressively work to encourage higher standards across the industry, there is evidence the new system is weeding out builders who do not have total commitment to their work.

*Max J. Croxford, commissioner,
Building Control Commission*

SUN 1/8/97