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Master Builders says Building EBA outcome illustrates the need to maintain the ABCC

The Master Builders Association has said the outcome of the Victorian Building Industry Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) is proof that more needs to be done to ensure a level playing field on pay negotiations.

The Master Builders concluded negotiations with the relevant unions on the EBA this week. The outcome will see employees of the building and construction sector receive a net accumulated wage increase of 27 per cent over four years adding severely to the cost of building in the State.

Association Executive Director Brian Welch said that despite solid negotiating on the Master Builders behalf, this was a less than ideal agreement for employers and subsequently for consumers and government projects.

“Unfortunately, this EBA will add greatly to the cost of building in Victoria,” Mr Welch said.

“The Master Builders fought hard for a fair agreement that will keep the cost of building in Victoria at a sustainable level but without a level playing field there is only so much we can achieve,” he said.

The main points of the agreement reached were:

- An increase in superannuation contribution by employers over the life of the EBA towards 12%;
- An annual increase of 5% to wages commencing from March 2012;
- All overtime at double time from March 2012– partially offset by changes to crib break entitlements;
- 5% per annum increase to daily fares and travel; and,
- Indexation of certain Award and expense related allowances (first aid, height, leading hand etc).

“The construction industry's only foil against rampant building unions is an effective and independent ABCC and Fair Work Australia,” Mr Welch said.

“At a State level, boosting the code of practice on government infrastructure projects will be vital to keeping downward pressure on future wage claims.”

“The Master Builders will work with the State and Federal governments to see these measures introduced over the coming years.”

The next EBA will be negotiated in 2015.

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