



## Media Release

9<sup>th</sup> September 2020

The Swimming Pool & Spa Association of Victoria (SPASAVIC) together with Landscaping Victoria Master Landscapers (LVML) is immensely disappointed with the current roadmap announced by the Victorian State Government on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of September.

As details of the Government's Roadmap to Recovery are being finalised, we write to you today as two peak industry bodies with one combined message – Landscapers, Pool & Spa Builders and Pool technicians need to be allowed to continue delivering essential well-being and sanitary benefits whilst maintaining employment for thousands of Victorians from September 14<sup>th</sup> 2020.

By way of introduction, Landscaping Victoria Master Landscapers (LVML) is a progressive Association of committed landscaping professionals working in a six billion-dollar industry.

Representing the industry since 1966, our 620 members represent commercial and residential landscape contractors, landscape designers, landscape service and product suppliers as well as the education (TAFE) sector. Considering all businesses across Victoria, not just our membership, the industry overall consists of some 4,500+ businesses, sustaining tens of thousands of direct and complimentary jobs.

The Swimming Pool and Spa Association of Victoria (SPASAVIC) founded in 1961, has been advocating on behalf of its constituents for many decades. The industry contributes over \$500 million dollars to the Victorian economy and employs over 10,000 people.

It also owns and operates the Summer and Winter Pool and Spa shows at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre along with the Backyard and Garden Show.

SPASAVIC represents 95% of pool and spa builders, pool technicians, pool shop retailers, suppliers / manufacturers and associated professionals such as building inspectors.

Both organisations represent thousands of Victorian workers and we are deeply concerned with the lack of empathy shown towards both industries where work has ground to a halt.

Our industries are at the forefront of Covid Safe strategies and employment procedures ensuring the complete safety of Victorians where our members work.

To not be able to enter a backyard under the current restrictions due to health and safety is a completely false assertion when our members work in isolated environments well away from the residential home and certainly keeping contact with the community to zero under current guidelines.

Under current restrictions released by the Victorian Government, it is unclear as to whether or not the works our combined memberships undertake can be performed under the First Step outline (Heavily Restricted) as of September 14<sup>th</sup>. We request that our members be permitted to get back to work.

The ramifications for many businesses and employees if they are forced to wait until October 26th will have a disastrous outcome to many thousands of Victorians.

Critically, it needs to be understood that Landscapers, Pool & Spa Builders along with Pool technicians:

- Work outdoors, separated from client/families who may be self-isolating and can arrange separate sanitation facilities
- Are well used to risk assessment, OH&S audits and use and application of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) during their normal working practice and follow a Covid Safe Plan
- Socially distance at all times whilst onsite
- Travel to site in their own vehicles and where staff have previously shared vehicles, businesses are now paying additional fuel costs for staff to take separate vehicles
- Have their own tools, or where required can allocate one person per task eliminating the need to share tools

We come together to implore the relevant Ministers and the Premier Daniel Andrews to give due consideration to our industries and the Covid Safe environment they operate within.

We seek an urgent review of current restrictions to renovations and our sectors from the relevant Ministers and the Premier to help the thousands of employees and small business owners who can no longer support these extreme measures of not being able to go to their work place.

To be ignored in such a way flies in the face of industry consultation and the slogans of “we are all in this together”. We acknowledge the hard work of the relevant departments to manage the process, however there must also be common sense applied to work environments.

SPASAVIC and LVML strongly support Covid Safe plans and procedures and we know that our members can effectively work in a manner which supports a Covid Safe environment.

Yours Sincerely



Chris Samartzis – CEO  
SPASA Victoria

Yours Sincerely



Megan Flower - CEO  
Landscaping Victoria Master Landscapers

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