

# Hardline umpire

## Industry chases Hadgkiss

VICTORIAN building code hard man Nigel Hadgkiss is tipped to become the new federal construction industry watchdog.

The former federal police officer has been touted as the man to take the tough task of reforming the industry through the reintroduction of the Australian Building and Construction Commission.

Building industry figures told the *Herald Sun* they want him for the job. They want him back in the chair to tackle alleged thuggery and bikie infiltration of the industry, which they say is adding to building costs across the country.

But Dave Noonan, national president of the Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union, denied there were widespread problems and said anyone claiming there was criminal behaviour in the building industry should report it to police.

Mr Hadgkiss was a deputy commissioner at the ABCC

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from 2005 to 2008 before it was closed by the Labor Government, and building industry figures told the *Herald Sun* he was feared by unions for his hardline approach.

He is currently head of Victoria's Construction Code Compliance Unit.

He has met with a Liberal Government committee, including Kooyong MP Josh Frydenberg, when it was discussing reforming the ABCC.

The *Herald Sun* understands he is highly regarded within government circles.

Master Builders Australia chief Wilhelm Harnisch said the Abbott Government had a mandate to reform the industry.

"We hope the Government holds its nerve and does not succumb to pressure to reduce the powers of the ABCC or engage in horse trading to water them down," he said. Mr Hadgkiss declined to comment.

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