

## OCN Strata Guide – EV Charging

As more information becomes available about EV Charging (EVC) so does the need for understanding and simplification. The actual customer for EV decision making is the owners corporation (OC) and a good starting position is understanding what these customer needs are.

### Responsibilities

#### Owner responsibilities

If you are the owner of an apartment, the introduction of EV charging into your building may or may not have been considered by the owners corporation. In the first instance, you should enquire if your building is EV-ready or not. A simple request to the Secretary of the strata committee, strata manager or building manager should determine if this is the case. If you are a tenant, you should approach your managing agent.

#### Owners corporation responsibilities

The owners corporation is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the running of your building. The owners corporation:

- Can develop and execute an EV charging strategy.
- Receives applications for EV charging from owners.
- Arranges installation and commissioning of the EV Charging infrastructure as required in the building
- Can assist with the connection of EV Supply Equipment (EVSE).

### EV Charging Methods

Often, we think about apartment buildings as large multi-story buildings supporting 100 plus apartments. The fact is that large buildings only represent 1% of apartment buildings. The following table demonstrates the distribution of apartment buildings according to size as identified by the number of lots. The table also shows actual number of apartments represented by these building sizes<sup>1</sup>.

Building Size range (lots)	% Buildings	% Apartments
1 - 10	75%	28%
11 - 100	24%	49%
101 +	1%	23%

While large buildings do represent a small percentage overall, the number of apartments they represent is significant and owners often affluent, leading to high levels of demand, so are an important consideration.

To help navigate the differences in requirements for EV Charging across the range of buildings, OCN in consultation with industry experts and the NSW Governments, has developed a range of different methods OCs can consider according to their needs and the needs of their owners.

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<sup>1</sup> UNSW City Futures and LRS data and OCN Analysis

## 5 Steps to initiate EV Charging

To understand OC needs and assessment of the available methods available for EVC, and so select the right method and approach for each building, there are 5 key steps we recommend OC take:

1. **Survey** - Conduct a resident survey to gauge EV charging intentions & attitudes for their building.
2. **Obtain a building energy assessment** to understand the impacts of EV charging, that assessment to include such information as:
  - Condition of the meter board
  - Existing circuit breaker sizes
  - Historical peak energy loads
  - Historical off-peak energy usage patterns.
  - Consideration of energy efficiency programs to reduce load and create extra electrical capacity.
3. **Evaluate methods**, as most suitable for your building, as outlined above.
4. **Evaluate payment options.**  
OCs may wish to investigate ways of recovering costs for the installation of EVC, depending on the circumstances of the building and the method of EVC selected.
5. **Plan approval process and Bylaw**

The OC has the sole responsibility for decisions about their building. The installation of EVC in apartment buildings is relatively high-power consumption does represent risk to the electrical capacity of the building if not properly managed.

It is OCNs view that all applications for EVC should be approved by the owners corporation to allow the proper assessment of energy assessment over time and be covered by a bylaw.

### Bylaws

A resident seeking to install EVC in an apartment building should always seek approval from the OC. In general terms, installing EVC is a change to common property, which requires a general resolution of the OC (EVC is included as part of the sustainability infrastructure changes so does not require a special resolution) and a by-law that explains the terms of use.

Our website contains examples of application forms and a EVC specific by-law. The by-law is in a form that allows multiple installations of EVC on a single by-law. All OCN by-laws come with general advice for their use.

## Potential roadblocks to the installation of EV Charging

### Buildings:

- The age or type of building may mean the electrical infrastructure is not always in good condition nor accessible, making the addition of new infrastructure difficult and expensive.
- There is not always sufficient electrical capacity into buildings to support EVC.
- Switch boards may not have sufficient capacity or be in good condition to support EVC.

### **Owners corporations (OC) and strata committees (SC):**

- OC or SC are not always sympathetic to change nor sustainability, making it difficult to gain approvals for retrofitting EV charging infrastructure in buildings.
- SC are often not inclined to spend any funds.
- EVC is not seen as a priority.
- There is a lack of investment strategy or prioritisation processes to allow EVC to be included in the discussion.
- Little desire to take on special levies if there is a lack of funding.

### **Capital Works Fund (CWF)**

- In some instances, a CWF either don't exist or have insufficient funds to support any capital expenditure, including EVC.
- What scarce funds do exist are prioritised to other capital expenditure deemed more important.

### **Load control:**

The electrical capacity in buildings is limited by cable size, switch board size and the capacity of the local electricity network. Any upgrade to increase building electrical capacity can be an expensive, time consuming and disruptive process. There are a range of load control alternatives available to manage peak demand and not exceed these electrical limitations.

## **More Information**

OCN is happy to aid our members, both OC and individuals by providing a comprehensive range of materials. Our members portal contains all the necessary detail to assist OC in their EV Charging journey, including:

- EVC Strata Guide
  - Detail of the methods available
  - Recommendations according to building size
  - The 5 steps
  - Indicative costs
  - Charge back and usage cost recovery options
- Case Studies
- Templates and user guides
- ByLaw
- Recordings of webinars
- Useful EVC related resources