OCN Subscriber Update

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF STRATA OWNERS

Dear

Welcome to the latest Subscriber Update.

We delivered one of our most popular webinars in April. It's clear to us that the soon to be introduced NSW Government mandatory training proposals have people talking.

And thank you to those who took the time to complete our Strata Training Survey. If you haven't done so, please take a minute to complete. Your feedback will help us to work with the decision makers to get the right fit. Here's the link: https://surveys.ht/5MTHH9

Please share this newsletter with others who may benefit from belonging to OCN - and urge them to join.

As a subscriber, you're missing out on a lot of benefits. Here's just a few of them:

a wealth of resources

Aside from the Member Forum, past webinar recordings, a growing suite of special member offers and discounted pro forma by-laws, your membership fees enable us to advocate on your behalf to improve outcomes for those of us living in strata.

Membership starts at just $99pa so why not join today? Join OCN

You can download and share our flyer about the benefits of membership here.

Cheers
Jenny Sims
Acting Director

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QUICK READS

National Construction Code 2025 Waterproofing Updates

The National Construction Code 2025 brings more clarity to waterproofing, with new requirements now referred to as a focus on the need to collect, direct and drain water away from habitable areas. Unfortunately, new rules often create confusion amongst sections of the industry, and these are no exception. Confusion is not the goal, but it's a fog. OCN plans to host an event with Ross Taylor, a specialist waterproofing consultant and Stan Gouzos, a building and construction consultant to explain the changes in plain English and bust the myths.

See below for info on our next webinar on this important subject.

Webinar: Reg proposed changes to Waterproofing and Weatherproofing Provisions of NCC 2025

Webinar Details:

- **Date:** Tue, 12th May, 2025
- **Time:** 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM AEST
- **Where:** Online via Zoom

Registrations open soon

Looking for a trusted supplier?

Members have access special deals from our Preferred Partners so why not join today? Our fees are increasing on 1 June so join before they go up

Australasian Strata Data

University of NSW City Futures Research Centre has released their 2024 Strata Data Report. Thanks to the Strata Community Association (New South Wales) NSW land registry, the 2022 report was to be the last due to the lack of/cost of accessing detailed data. The report has some interesting statistics which should drive government and OCN focus.

Read the report here.

Sustainability

Sustainability Saves Money

Presidio is a 9-storey building with 55 apartments in Newtown. Faced with rising energy costs the owners looked for financially savvy ways to reduce the building's environmental impact.

A 2015 City of Sydney funded energy audit prompted installation of a carbon monoxide monitor for the underground carpark, LED upgrades for all common areas, lift upgrades for improved energy efficiency.

In 2022, another City grant funded a NABERS energy and water assessment, and a solar feasibility study. Presidio added a rooftop solar system (40kW) and installed a device to capture data on solar waters.

The result? NABERS energy rating increased from 1.5 to 3 stars. The building also enjoys ongoing energy savings of up to $1,000 per month and a solar system payback period of 5 years.

Solar Installers

Till solar installers across Australia interested in doing strata installs can be searched and viewed on the Electrify Strata Installer Directory on google maps here.

The Top 40 solar installers are listed here. A more in depth summary of the top 20 NSW strata solar installers is included.

Wednesday 14 May, 6.30-7.30pm
Efficient Electric Apartments and Townhouses: Success Stories (online)

Looking to improve energy efficiency or electrify your scheme, and not sure where to start? Hear successes, challenges and insights from local residents who have upgraded their apartments and townhouses and switched to electric appliances. Presented by the Cities of Yarra, Merrimbula, Stonnington and Boroondara. **Register here**

Training and Disclosure

NSW Strata Management Disclosure requirements

As we head into the AGM season, OCN wants to hear about your experience with strata management conflict of interest disclosures. From 3 February 2025 strata managing agents have proposed disclosure obligations.

Strata managers must comply with the new disclosure obligations. If you suspect a strata manager has breached the laws, you can report them to NSW Fair Trading here/claim a complaint.

"Chairing a Strata Committee can be very difficult if you don't have good strata management to guide you. OCN has already helped me to take better care of Zoe's property and the community we live there". Jane, Richmond NSW Committee Training

In April, OCN hosted a webinar looking at the situation in NSW, Qld and Victoria. We asked the 800+ attendees what they want to see included, which helped inform our conversations with NSW Fair Trading who are developing this training.

OCN' s survey on the proposed Strata Committee training threw some light on what Committee members want. Of the 181 survey respondents, 84% of them want training to be face to face only, while 16% votes in favour of online or a mix

How much should it cost?

Training delivery method

Graded assessment?

"I think OCN offers a huge bang for the buck as a member, and think all the OCN staff and board do their great work on our behalf." Greg, Coogee

OCN Advocacy and Policy

National Insurance Brokers Code of Conduct Review

OCN made a submission to the latest 5-year review of the Code, proposing much needed strengthening of language and requirements. This was informed by the Code's shocking compliance breaches (NSW in 2024 and the findings of the Treasury Code Review. Read our submissions here: https://ocnsw.org.au/ocn-submissions/

EV charging installation guides

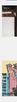
OCN collaborated with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, the EV Council and others to develop EV ready buildings panel session videos, to help committees navigate the process of installing EV charging infrastructure and engaging contractors, installation and operation and maintenance of EV charging infrastructure.

Meeting with ICA National

We met with ICA to discuss the steps they are taking to address issues raised by the ABC in 2024, such as 'designated authorities' and insurance commissions.

Quarterly NSW Ministerial Meeting

This meeting canvassed issues such as the proposed mandatory committee training, which will be accompanied by strata managing agent and real estate agent disclosure obligations. The rapid growth of strata law reforms should commence late 2025, and will hopefully include embedded networks (something OCN has been agitating for since 2015). OCN's questionnaire has received more than 85 of strata managers responses, and the results will be presented to the Minister these next few weeks.



Qld Community Title Working Group

OCN has been invited to sit on this, and the Attorney General's office has asked to meet with OCN in May. We've met with PCQ, and plan to meet with other participants to find common ground on issues such as Strata Title Law Reform, Dispute Resolution for the CTWG review of debt collection, dispute resolution, management rights and residential amenity (including addressing bullying) and will advocate strongly on these topics

Read more about our advocacy here

State based News

New South Wales

New NSW Strata Management Disclosure Requirements

New NSW disclosure requirements commenced in February 2025. Encouraging, in our opinion, to a more proactive Regulator. NSW Fair Trading identified breaches of the laws in February 2024 (see blog) and (ABC) targeting strata managing agents for dealing audit.

SHH 'Shoddy Sydney' Defects Series

Defects cost Sydney's homeowners and taxpayers $700m annually. How did we get here and what is being done about it? The Spring Hill Residents Group (SHH) has a new blog: https://www.shh.com.au/national/new/shoddy-sydney-2025%E2%80%93-intro.html.

Live in the Inner West?

Join the new Inner West Council Apartment Network! You'll find a growing suite of resources, ranging from Council initiatives to State and Federal government programs, to tips from fellow residents. Social networking meetings (delivered live and online). https://ourcrew.net/apartment-new-south-wales/apartment-network and April 5 kick-off event. Inner West Apartments Network Launch: Solar Grants and FOGO

City of Sydney Sustainability News

In a lighter note, if you're wondering how to recycle Christmas Lights, the City's latest blog, look no further. Learn more here.

- How an Ecologenie apartment complex cut waste for residents, saved on power and future-proofed against fast approaching bans
- Energy Hubs
- Whole Hubs
- Hubs Hub
- Drop unwanted items at Recycle It Saturday.

Strata Living Guide

NSW Fair Trading has relaunched Strata living: A guide to the essentials for strata owners. This guide aims to help strata owners and residents understand how strata works in NSW and their rights and responsibilities. Download a copy of the guide here: https://ocnsw.org/strata-living-guide

Queensland

Body Corporate Law Reforms

As we approach the first anniversary of new strata laws in Queensland, some strong no-leadership-old-old stuck by reducing the approval rate from 100% (of owners, not one project has been approved, 'lefty'. Under the new rules,a scheme may be terminated if it is proven that the building is "not economically viable" or will not be within five years. Read article here

e-Scooter Battery Fire

Charging e-scooters or lithium-ion batteries at night, is a big danger in apartments. Fire risk, injury, malfunction or go-into thermal runaway, they will cause an intense fire really quickly.

For an example of what not to do, see the ABC news story about how a man decided to place a lithium-ion battery in his freezer. Interstate strata laws work well and we know what economic volatility means

Short Term Letting & CCTV

Short Term Letting is a contentious separate legislation preventing an owner from short-term letting but one common inquiry is whether a body corporate can ban or restrict short-term letting.

Based on legislation, the body corporate cannot create a by-law that restricts the owner's ability to short-term let their lot. Recent decisions have been made by the suspended decisions of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) and adjudicators. Read more here

Aust Capital Territory

OCN made a submission to the Inquiry into the Management of Strata Properties. Read more here

Anti-NCC readers can read about local advocacy and news here.

Victoria

Financial shake up for Owners Corporations

Following an announcement by Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos, significant changes are coming for Victorian owners' corporations (OCs) – and they may have far reaching impacts on financial management.

When Issuing fee notices, OCs must now provide detailed advice on owners' rights, including their dispute resolution and payment plans, how to access dispute resolution, and advice to seek financial counselling.

City of Melbourne

Approximately 81% of City of Melbourne residents live in apartments. These vertical communities pose a different set of challenges for owners and renters looking to reduce their energy and water use, and to better manage their waste.

Did you know? Each year apartment living contributes to:

- 20% of the city's water usage
- 1% of greenhouse gas emissions
- more than 20,000 tonnes of waste

The City of Melbourne has dedicated resources to help you optimise your community living experience. Read more here

Discover the proposed strata changes in Victoria for 2025, including governance updates, sustainability initiatives, and pet ownership rules. Learn how reforms could impact you and how to prepare.

The proposed changes represent a significant shift aimed at modernising strata laws and addressing the needs of a growing urban population. By enhancing governance, promoting sustainability, and improving flexibility, these reforms aim to create a fairer and more efficient system for all stakeholders.

It's essential to stay informed and proactive. Whether you're an owner, tenant, or developer, understanding these changes will help you adapt and thrive in Victoria's evolving strata landscape. For more information on the proposed reforms, visit the Consumer Affairs Victoria website

https://www.vcat.vic.gov.au/consumers/ownerships-order-new-answers

Keep up to date with the latest developments by following official government announcements and consulting with strata management professionals.

- Victorian Government Strata Reforms

Western Australia

The Government announced the 5 years review of WA's strata law (the Strata Titles Act 1985) that will include two public consultation periods.

All short-term rental accommodation (STRA) in WA must have been registered by 1 January 2025 following the passing of new laws by the WA government.

Concerns have been raised about tenants registering a property without the owner's authorisation and sub-letting it as short-term accommodation.

South Australia

Discover the proposed strata changes in South Australia for 2025, including governance updates, sustainability initiatives, and pet ownership rules. Learn how these reforms could impact you and how to prepare.

For more information on the proposed reforms, visit the South Australian Government website

Strata Community Association (NSW) | Strata Community Association (ACT) | Strata Community Association (QLD) | Strata Community Association (SA) | Strata Community Association (WA) | Strata Community Association (VIC) | Strata Community Association (TAS) | Strata Community Association (NT) | Strata Community Association (NZ) | Strata Community Association (UK) | Strata Community Association (Ireland) | Strata Community Association (Malta) | Strata Community Association (Cyprus) | Strata Community Association (Dubai) | Strata Community Association (Hong Kong) | Strata Community Association (Singapore) | Strata Community Association (Malaysia) | Strata Community Association (Thailand) | Strata Community Association (Philippines) | Strata Community Association (Indonesia) | Strata Community Association (Vietnam) | Strata Community Association (Cambodia) | Strata Community Association (Laos) | Strata Community Association (Myanmar) | Strata Community Association (Brunei) | Strata Community Association (Japan) | Strata Community Association (Korea) | Strata Community Association (China) | Strata Community Association (India) | Strata Community Association (Nepal) | Strata Community Association (Sri Lanka) | Strata Community Association (Bangladesh) | Strata Community Association (Pakistan) | Strata Community Association (Afghanistan) | Strata Community Association (Iran) | Strata Community Association (Iraq) | Strata Community Association (Saudi Arabia) | Strata Community Association (Yemen) | Strata Community Association (Oman) | Strata Community Association (United Arab Emirates) | Strata Community Association (Qatar) | Strata Community Association (Bahrain) | Strata Community Association (Kuwait) | Strata Community Association (Jordan) | Strata Community Association (Lebanon) | Strata Community Association (Syria) | Strata Community Association (Turkey) | Strata Community Association (Israel) | Strata Community Association (Palestine) | Strata Community Association (Egypt) | Strata Community Association (Libya) | Strata Community Association (Tunisia) | Strata Community Association (Algeria) | Strata Community Association (Morocco) | Strata Community Association (Mauritania) | Strata Community Association (Mali) | Strata Community Association (Niger) | Strata Community Association (Chad) | Strata Community Association (Sudan) | Strata Community Association (South Sudan) | Strata Community Association (Eritrea) | Strata Community Association (Djibouti) | Strata Community Association (Ethiopia) | Strata Community Association (Somalia) | Strata Community Association (Kenya) | Strata Community Association (Uganda) | Strata Community Association (Rwanda) | Strata Community Association (Burundi) | Strata Community Association (Tanzania) | Strata Community Association (Seychelles) | Strata Community Association (Comoros) | Strata Community Association (Madagascar) | Strata Community Association (Mauritius) | Strata Community Association (Reunion) | Strata Community Association (Mayotte) | Strata Community Association (Zambia) | Strata Community Association (Malawi) | Strata Community Association (Mozambique) | Strata Community Association (Zimbabwe) | Strata Community Association (Botswana) | Strata Community Association (Namibia) | Strata Community Association (South Africa) | Strata Community Association (Lesotho) | Strata Community Association (Swaziland) | Strata Community Association (Angola) | Strata Community Association (Democratic Republic of the Congo) | Strata Community Association (Republic of the Congo) | Strata Community Association (Gabon) | Strata Community Association (Equatorial Guinea) | Strata Community Association (Cameroon) | Strata Community Association (Central African Republic) | Strata Community Association (Nigeria) | Strata Community Association (Benin) | Strata Community Association (Togo) | Strata Community Association (Ghana) | Strata Community Association (Burkina Faso) | Strata Community Association (Ivory Coast) | Strata Community Association (Liberia) | Strata Community Association (Sierra Leone) | Strata Community Association (Guinea) | Strata Community Association (Guinea-Bissau) | Strata Community Association (Gambia) | Strata Community Association (Senegal) | Strata Community Association (Cape Verde