

**From:** OCN Executive Officer <eo@ocn.org.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 5 November 2019 8:28 PM  
**To:** David Watt  
**Subject:** OCN Update - October 2019

OCN Subscriber Update

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**OWNERS  
CORPORATION  
NETWORK**

Level 5, 95 Pitt Street  
SYDNEY, NSW 2000  
Australia  
T: (02) 8197 9919  
[www.ocn.org.au](http://www.ocn.org.au)



## OCN Update - October 2019

**Dear David**

Building defects was again a key focus for OCN this month, dominated by our advocacy on the Government's Design & Building Practitioners Bill 2019 introduced into Parliament at the end of October. The Bill is only one step of many needed for real change. OCN is continuing to press for amendments that would provide more immediate material consumer protection for new apartment owners.

The ABC 7.30 Report series on building defects in apartments was comprehensive and helped keep focus on much needed regulatory change. We are grateful for those OCN members who offered to have their stories told.

Our thanks too to our Premium Sponsor, [Strata Plus](#), for involving OCN in their October client information event. It provided great insight into the importance of a good relationship between Committees and Strata Managers and it is always good meeting other owners working to make their strata communities better.

Finally, it has been great to see both new and more experienced members continuing to learn from each other on the members only forum. The forum has again been active this month covering issues such as fire services cost management, by-law enforcement options, safety responsibilities for contractors working on common property, and pets in apartments to name a few. We are developing our event program for 2020 and the forum helps identify what topics are of most value to members. In the words of one new member:

*"It's your preparedness to help others to try and resolve issues you have already experienced which makes this such a valuable forum. Being a relative newbie to strata living, strata committees, NCAT and regulations it is reassuring to know that someone out there has had the very experience you are seeking advice on or help in avoiding."*



OCN members enjoy a growing suite of member benefits including supplier discounts.



### OCN Membership Drive - Limited Time Only!

There are around 90,000 strata schemes and 1,000,000+ people living in strata. We need them and they need OCN!

Individuals and schemes that **join before 31 December** will get extended membership to 30 June 2021.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

## HAVE YOUR SAY



### RMIT Cladding Research Project

You are invited to participate in the "**At what cost? Cladding concerns for owners**" research on the scale of the problems owners of property with combustible cladding face. This involves a 30-60 minute audio-recorded **in-person or telephone interview**. Answers will form the basis of range of peer reviewed reports, journal articles, conference paper/s and/ or press releases.

**Interested?** Email Dr David Oswald at [david.oswald@rmit.edu.au](mailto:david.oswald@rmit.edu.au) or Dr Trivess Moore at [trivess.moore@rmit.edu.au](mailto:trivess.moore@rmit.edu.au).

## OCN UPCOMING EVENTS



**For your diary...**



**Saturday 30 November, 10.00am - 1.00pm** - OCN 2019 AGM! Have your say on what you'd like to see OCN focus on in 2020. Can't attend the meeting? Submit your thoughts via the [event page](#)! [Details](#)

\*\*\* (NEW date and venue, includes a light lunch) \*\*\*

Our previous meeting enjoyed high praise from a new member - *"I was very impressed with the calibre of the speakers and content; outstanding."*

OCN members can access [all OCN event papers](#) on the website!

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# ADVOCACY



## Building Stronger Foundations

The Bill is very much a 'first step' in re-regulating residential apartment construction and relies heavily on regulations that have not yet been developed. The timing for this is uncertain, it is a very significant piece of work, and Christmas is approaching. In the meantime, thousands of new apartment owners have entered the market since Opal Tower hit news on Christmas Eve last year.

OCN is continuing to press for some simple amendments that would immediately improve the consumer protection available to new apartment owners. We have excellent support from specialist lawyers in the field providing significant hours at no charge. This input is invaluable. We remain hopeful that our further engagement with the Minister's staff and Members of Parliament will help make a real and timely difference to new apartment owners.

In related activity, OCN will sit on the Building Reform Expert Panel recently established by the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation. We are also represented in a stakeholder group created by the NSW Building Commissioner, Mr David Chandler, OAM, looking at non-legislative levers to effect culture change in the sector.

There is still a very long way to go in achieving adequate consumer safeguards for new apartment owners. In the meantime we continue to urge extreme caution when purchasing new apartments, particularly in buildings over three levels or 'off the plan'.

[READ SUBMISSION](#)



## Short Term Letting

OCN's focus is now on ensuring that there is a mandatory registration system, and that the registration system is independent of the tourist industry. It will not be possible for the new regime to commence this year. OCN will put out an updated fact sheet before Christmas.

**OCN members can purchase the OCN pro-forma by-law** expertly drafted and tailored to the forthcoming legislation that allows a scheme to prohibit STL by non-resident owners.



## Other Activity

We also participated in Digital Survey Plans roundtables as Land Registry Services grapples with the large volume of data available but not accessible.

We brought your by-law concerns to Land Registry Services; like what happens when you discover a key Special By-Law is omitted from consolidated by-laws?

And we're deep in conversation about a possible Strata Register.

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## OCN - The Voice of Strata Owners

Check out the [OCN Policies here](#).

Check out the [latest submissions here](#).

Check out the [latest OCN media coverage here](#).

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE STRATA SECTOR



## Upcoming Events NSW



Fair  
Trading

7 November, 2pm - 3pm

Role of the Strata Committee and  
information for Committee members

[REGISTER](#)



Fair  
Trading

21 November, 2pm - 3pm

New schemes including the initial period, the  
First AGM and handover of records, the role  
of the original owner and strata manager

REGISTER



### City of Sydney Strata Skills 101 Workshops

12 November, 6pm - 8pm

Strata Paws: Living with Pets in Apartments. Non city residents are welcome.

REGISTER



### Green Square Network

12 November, 6pm - 8pm

Managing your Building's Energy Costs - Is Solar pv right for you?

REGISTER



### Deakin Uni Navigating Building Defects

13 November, 9am - 6pm

Navigating Building Defects: from Cause to Effect is a 1-day intensive program for strata, building and facilities management professionals.

REGISTER



### North Sydney Council Futureproofing Apartments Program

14 November, 5pm - 8pm

Free event where you can meet with strata upgrade specialists who can make your savings project happen. Savings are often larger than cost of implementation, so you save from day one!

REGISTER



### Darling Square Network

27 November, 6pm - 8pm

Managing your Building's Energy Costs - Is solar right for you?

REGISTER

## Upcoming Events QLD



### QBCCM Dispute Resolution Seminar

2 December 2019 at 2pm

Dealing with Difficult People

REGISTER



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## STRATA SECTOR NEWS

### National News



#### Building Defects and Flammable Cladding

One devastated Mascot Towers owner has set up a change.org petition asking the Federal Government for a Royal Commission into the Home Building Industry - **we urge you to sign the petition.**

[SIGN THE PETITION](#)

### NSW News



#### Environmental Performance Grants Close Soon

The final round of the 2019 grants program is now open

Environmental performance - applications for these programs close promptly at 5pm on Monday 18 November 2019.

Matching grants – applications for these programs close promptly at 5pm on Monday 2 December 2019.

The City is hosting 15-minute Q&A meetings on 6 November where you can discuss your application, project idea and decide what program is best for you.

Projects must take place from 1 May 2020 to 30 April 2021.

[DETAILS](#)

### Qld News



#### Consultation extended for new Body Corporate and Community Management Regulations

The consultation period for all draft regulations for the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 has been extended to 5pm on 1 December 2019.

You can read the consultation drafts and find out how to make a submission on the community consultation pages of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General website.

[DETAILS](#)



## Appeal Tribunal Upholds By-Law Banning Short Term Letting

You have been told time and time again that a body corporate cannot make a by-law banning short term letting.

But a strata community put in place a by-law prohibiting lettings of less than one month as a means of protecting the special residential amenity of their community.

The by-law was overturned by the Commissioner's Office. But the QCAT appeal was successful. The reasons given by the appeal tribunal give a most compelling case for why a body corporate's power to make by-laws is robust, and rightly so.

OVERVIEW

## RESOURCES

OCN members have access to a large library of resources.

*Thanks to our premium sponsor*

**STRATA**  
**PLUS**

2019 Owners Corporation  
Network. [Unsubscribe](#) from this Members  
Update.

