

## MEDIA RELEASE

24 April 2025

### SCA Victoria Welcomes Dedicated Helpline and New Support for Strata Residents

Strata Community Association Victoria (SCA Vic) welcomes the Victorian Government's announcement of a dedicated phone channel for owners corporation (strata) queries and the introduction of mandatory, informative fee notices for residents experiencing financial hardship.

SCA (Vic) has long advocated to government for a strata helpline, recognising the critical need for better public support and clarity around body corporate responsibilities. The launch of a strata-specific helpline is a significant win for the 1.27 million Victorians who live in strata communities—representing around 18% of the state's population. With more than 1,044,000 strata lots across 128,896 schemes, the need for tailored support has never been greater.

*"This is a welcome and practical step toward making strata living more accessible and better understood," said Susan Chandler, SCA Victoria General Manager. "For many residents, especially first-time apartment owners, navigating strata rules can be overwhelming. A dedicated helpline provides a much-needed support bridge between communities and the government."*

The enhanced fee notices will help inform owners of their rights, including access to payment plans and free financial counselling services such as the National Debt Helpline. These changes are particularly welcome amid the rising cost of living, which has driven up essential outgoings like insurance premiums and trade services, key components of strata levies.

These reforms are especially timely. Owners corporations have statutory obligations to discharge, starting with essential functions like insurance, repairs, and maintenance. These obligations cost money and unlike commercial operations, most Owners Corporations rarely budget for a surplus. In practice, almost all levies collected are immediately directed toward meeting these statutory duties. That means every owner's contribution is critical when some don't pay, there is a shortfall that can severely impact the Owners Corporation's ability to function.

*"This isn't just about communication, it's about safeguarding the financial health and operational stability of thousands of strata communities," Chandler added. "Clarity around obligations and available support ensures that owners can act early and responsibly when facing financial pressure."*

SCA (Vic) will continue advocating for the creation of a Victorian Strata Commissioner, mirroring similar roles in Queensland, New South Wales, and most recently, a commitment in the ACT. This position would provide consistent leadership, advocacy, and accountability to an increasingly complex and vital housing sector.

We also note the recent passage of legislation requiring mandatory training for owners corporation managers. This is a crucial step in lifting industry standards. SCA Victoria members already adhere to a strict Code of Professional Conduct and are required to undertake ongoing professional education, ensuring they stay informed, capable and responsive to community needs.

*“These reforms mark a strong starting point, but the journey doesn’t end here,” Chandler concluded. “A Strata Commissioner would ensure Victoria keeps pace with the growth and complexity of strata housing. We need long-term leadership and a single point of accountability to champion this essential part of our housing future.”*

The strata sector is a powerhouse in Victoria’s housing economy:

- 752 full-time strata managers and 1,299 other employees work in SCA member businesses
- 50% of all lots in Victoria are managed by SCA member firms
- \$471 billion total insured value of strata properties in Victoria

We welcome the Victorian Government’s steps forward and stand ready to support further reform. It’s time to recognise that strata is not a niche, it’s a cornerstone of modern urban living.

\*statistics obtained from the [2024 UNSW Australasian Strata Insights Report](#)