

# 2020 ELECTION PRIORITIES:

## CREATING COMMUNITIES AT THEIR BEST

**BUILDING TRUST**

**AND LEADING THROUGH ADVOCACY,**

**BEST PRACTICE, AND PROFESSIONALISM**

**FOR STRATA COMMUNITIES**

**QLD  
2020**

# Advocating for the betterment of strata communities

SCA (Qld) is the peak association supporting the state's strata sector, with more than 1,200 individual and corporate members who help oversee, advise, and manage a collective sinking fund balance of \$165 million.

We bring together people who manage strata schemes, own units or live in strata communities, and those who provide products and services for schemes. We also provide education, advice, and advocacy to enable better understanding of the regulations, obligations, and owner's rights.

This Election Priorities Paper is our call to action to the Queensland parties and for lot owners and strata sector professionals to join us in effecting change that matters to half a million lot owners.

## Education of all stakeholders and the improvement of professional standards in the strata industry is our highest priority

We have been working tirelessly nationally and with industry stakeholders to create the accreditation pathway for strata managers. Our collaborative work attitude is respected by government and fellow stakeholders because we strive for professionalism and pursue to faithfully represent the interests of all stakeholders in the strata sector, in particular consumers who lack a collective voice.

Our education program includes body corporate manager Continuing Professional Development, strata supplier training and lot owner education.

Thanks to member guidance and working groups, we have designed an advocacy agenda and education program that increases body corporate rights, protections, and understanding of the unique lifestyle and nature of strata schemes.

# Our 2020 priorities

We commit to represent the strata community sector and use member feedback to challenge the government to undertake bold reforms. SCA (Qld) has set the bar high in owner, supplier and body corporate manager education but we must call for more action at a legislative level to protect strata communities and the integrity of professional body corporate managers.

The lack of reform means less skilled, less educated, less professional operators enter the Queensland strata market, creating lower standards of customer service. the lack of legislative reform means archaic procedures, slow administration and unfair treatment of strata communities.

Our call for legislative reform concerns these 7 priorities:

- 1 Fix the [North Queensland insurance crisis](#) for good, through government financial support and innovative reform. The government must provide financial support to NQ strata communities and a reinsurance pool must be seriously investigated.
- 2 [Protect consumers from defects](#) by broadening the Statutory Warranty Scheme to include high-rises. There must be more transparency in the building and construction sector and more documentation provided at development approval stage. Certifiers ought to be regulated.
- 3 Enable strata communities to better define themselves by reducing the restrictions that apply to by-laws and adjusting some of the enforcement mechanisms to allow bodies corporate to [better self-regulate](#) issues like towing, pets, smoking and short-term letting. Developers should be allowed to design communities with special features so consumers can take comfort in what they are buying into, and these features cannot be changed by a minority.
- 4 Increased consumer protections including an [expanded dispute resolution framework](#) to include original owners as a party to a chapter 6 dispute so the obligations on original owners to hand over important information and documents on the scheme can be better enforced. Introduce some form of licensing or professional credentials requirements for strata managers.
- 5 Creating a more [balanced approach to management rights](#), including to improve a body corporate's ability to cost-effectively enforce the performance of caretaking duties.
- 6 Strata sector professionals and volunteer committee members must be better protected against [bullying and harassment](#). SCA (Qld) research shows that poor behaviour is common without any legislative protections.
- 7 SCA (Qld)'s practical efforts to promote education in the strata sector will have much more impact with [government set requirements for accreditation and education](#). Some form of licensing or regulation of professional body corporate managers is critical for consumer protection.



# How we have affected change...



## Cladding Regulation Amendments

Through tireless negotiation with the Department of Housing and Public Works, SCA (Qld) succeeded in changing the cladding regulation twice. Firstly, strata managers became recognised as authorised representatives if there is an agreement in place (proof of agency). Secondly, the timelines for both stage 2 and stage 3 were extended by 10 weeks each, allowing communities to make decisions in compliance with the BCCMA. Thirdly, the Guideline was amended as to the adequate assessment by a building industry professional at stage 2. We lobbied extensively and effectively, meeting with the Federal Labour President Wayne Swan, Deputy Premier Jackie Trad, the Department of Housing and Public Works, the Queensland Building and Construction Commission, and eventually the Courier Mail. This industry issue has had an enormous impact in getting the SCA (Qld) brand into the public and much attention centred on the role of strata managers.

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## ACCC Insurance Inquiry

After receiving over 280 submissions, the ACCC released several reports including findings that 6,000 strata insurance policies were held in north Queensland between 2007-08 and 2016-17, strata insurance premiums (per sum insured) have increased by 60-80% in NQ and North WA but remained relatively flat in the NT and the rest of Australia.

SCA (Qld) has been heavily advocating for help for the state's northern residents, demonstrating with real member data that schemes not only face affordability issues, but also availability concerns, with the region's bodies corporate increasingly finding themselves abandoned by insurance providers. SCA (Qld) has met with the Insurance Council of Australia and Members of Parliament to push for government assistance and intervention to alleviate the financial difficulties rising premiums are causing strata communities and ensure that all schemes are afforded the opportunity to comply with legislation and achieve full insurance coverage.

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## Rental reforms

Following on from the 2018 rental reform campaign by the government, SCA (Qld) made submissions to the Department of Housing to explain the complexities around by-laws and community living under the Body Corporate and Community Management Act (BCCMA). 135,000 responses were received by the Queensland Government regarding rental reform, with pets, minimum housing standards, entry practices, property and tenancy managers, privacy, and dispute resolution being the most common areas for discussion. The Department of Housing has used these submissions to complete its detailed reform package.

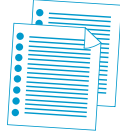
While we have been informed that the BCCMA and scheme by-laws will not be overruled by these reforms, SCA (Qld)'s communication has centred around clear communication of tenant responsibilities to ensure that the expectations of all parties may be met.

# 2019 public education work at a glance



20+

Government and Policy Meetings



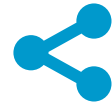
11

Submissions lodged



34

Qld media information articles



525

original social media posts



1,121

Memberships



306,516

Member managed lots



2,184

Education Event attendees



6

New Education Courses

## Industry statistics

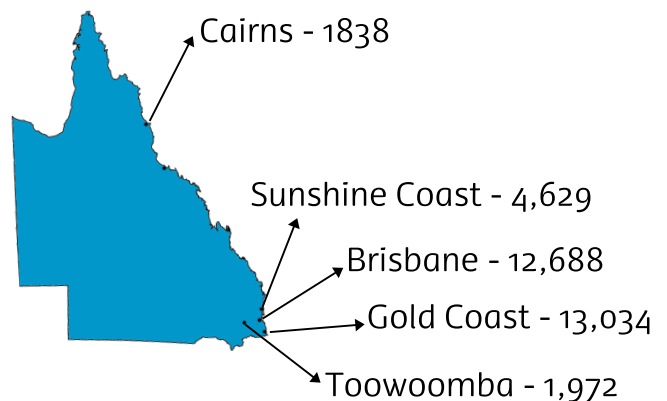
Strata is rapidly becoming the most popular form of residence in Queensland



**MORE THAN ONE IN FOUR**

QLD RESIDENTS LIVE IN STRATA

Strata schemes are being built all around the state





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