

MEDIA RELEASE

SCA Australasia Appoints Stephen Phillips as Independent Chair of Complaints and Conduct Panel; Delivers on its Six Steps Plan

Wednesday 26 June 2024: SCA is delighted to introduce Stephen Phillips as the new independent Chair of the Professional Standards and Membership Board Advisory Group (PSMBAG), the committee tasked with handling complaints against SCA members.

Mr Phillips' appointment delivers in a very timely fashion one of SCA's steps in its Six Steps to Ensure Confidence, underlining the commitment SCA has to improving practice and outcomes in the strata sector.

With over two decades of distinguished experience as a Non-Executive Director and Senior Executive, including CEO roles, Stephen brings an unparalleled wealth of expertise in leadership, governance, and strategic oversight across various sectors.

Stephen's career spans business, government, and the not-for-profit sectors, with notable contributions to legal, accounting, finance, property, insurance, engineering, and corporate services. His extensive chair experience includes leading governance boards and committees, ensuring rigorous compliance and enhancing organisational integrity.

Speaking on his appointment, SCA Australasia CEO Alisha Fisher said Stephen's timely appointment reinforces SCA Australasia's commitment to raising standards and improving practices among its members and delivering on its Six-Step Plan commitment.

"The appointment of Stephen Phillips realises one of the goals of our Six Step Plan to Ensure Confidence – giving consumers and members more faith in the robustness of our member Code of Conduct and complaints process.

"Any person at any time can contact SCA through our process and make a complaint against an SCA member and know that an independent person will evaluate and action their complaint as appropriate," she said.

Ms Fisher spoke more broadly to update members and the public about the progress SCA was making in implementing the Six Step plan.

"SCA has taken the ABC media coverage and the subsequent criticisms of the strata sector very seriously, and we've engaged with the overwhelming majority of stakeholders both within and outside the sector in the time since the report," said Ms Fisher.

"We know how many great strata managers and strata industry professionals are out there, working hard for their committees and delivering brilliant outcomes to the strata communities they manage year after year.

"But what we also know is that there are some strata professionals falling short of that mark, which is why we formulated our six-step plan for reinforce confidence in the industry.

"We've been incredibly busy over the past three or so months implementing our plan and have made significant progress, or fulfilled each of the six steps.

“Our hope is that consumers can gain confidence by seeing that SCA members are held to a higher standards through an enforceable Code of Conduct with an independent Chair, through levels of disclosure and transparency that go beyond state and territory legislation and by taking advantage of SCA advice, training and best practice resources.

“We want to see our actions lifting standards throughout the industry, not just to the SCA members that these steps apply to,” Ms Fisher said.

Please find below the actions that have been undertaken since the plan’s commencement on 25 March 2024.

SCA Australasia Initiatives - Six Steps to Ensure Confidence



Fast-tracking the date for the mandatory requirement for SCA members to implement SCA’s Best Practice Insurance Disclosure Guide to 30 June 2024, with full enforceability under the SCA complaints and conduct panel.

SCA has held education sessions via webinar in each state and territory with incredibly high attendance rates. SCA has distributed and made available [resources](#) including consumer and member fact sheets, infographics, the full best practice insurance guideline, videos and implementation template head of the 30 June 2024 implementation deadline. An implementation FAQ will be available to all members based on the questions raised in the education sessions.



Appointing an independent Chair for the SCA Australasia complaints and conduct panel.

On 20 June 2024, SCA appointed Stephen Phillips as the Independent Chair of the SCA Professional Standards and Membership Board Advisory Group (PSMBAG), the committee tasked with handling all complaints against SCA members. Mr Phillips was selected through a competitive process and brings a wealth of experience in Non-Executive Director roles across the non-profit and government spaces. Complaints can be made by any person at any time by using the online form on the SCA website are judged against the SCA [Code of Conduct](#) by PSMBAG with Stephen chairing.

03

Allocating additional resources and improved accessibility to the SCA Australasia complaints process.

SCA has removed any fee associated with making a complaint to SCA, has made the process more user-friendly and has dedicated additional resources to managing incoming complaints.

04

Commencing the production of a rigorous best practice guideline that clearly addresses conflicts of interest in the strata sector and other disclosures, outside of insurance.

SCA Australasia has publicly posted a Request for Proposal (RFP) and is following a process to evaluate the best researcher using some independent and external stakeholders.

The RFP will include research, education and best practice focused components.

05

Offering additional support for SCA member businesses to have access to appropriate resources, advice and training to improve practice where identified.

Webinars and materials are being planned for each SCA jurisdiction to support members and members with extensive industry experience will be making themselves more available to assist members with enquiries.

06

Supporting the independent review SCA (NSW) will be conducting.

SCA Australasia is supporting SCA (NSW) with their initiatives (included above).

Consumers, members and the general public can access the full insurance best practice disclosure guide, fact sheet, videos and infographics that support that work [here](#).

We encourage members and strata committees to visit the SCA Australasia website and review the [Code of Conduct](#) and its independent complaints management process, and reach out with any enquiries by contacting admin@strata.community.

The SCA Code of Conduct outlines the principles guiding SCA Members in the strata environment. It emphasises common sense, fairness, integrity, and good judgement as part of best business practices. The Code sets clear requirements for all Members to follow, both in letter and spirit. In case of a breach, the

Complaint Management Process (CMP) is available which covers the complaint process from lodging to investigation, findings, and appeals.

ENDS

About Strata Community Association (SCA)

[Strata Community Association \(SCA\)](#) is the peak industry body for Body Corporate and Community Title Management (also referred to as Strata Management, Strata Title, or Owners Corporations Management) in Australia and New Zealand.

Our 5,000 individual and corporate members include strata/body corporate managers, support staff, owners' representatives and suppliers of products and services to the industry. SCA proudly fulfils the dual roles of a professional institute and consumer advocate.

We believe in taking action with urgency in order to raise public awareness about some of the most pressing issues facing today's society. Please join us by supporting our efforts to make a measurable difference for the community.

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