

MEDIA ALERT



14 April 2020

TELEVISED MEETINGS TO PROTECT ACT STRATA COMMUNITIES FROM COVID-19

Interviews available

The ACT's peak body for strata title properties has welcomed urgent moves to allow owners and managers to hold **telephone and video meetings** to protect them during the **Coronavirus pandemic**.

Strata Community Association (ACT) represents 85 percent of strata management practitioners in the Australian Capital Territory.

SCA (ACT) President Chris Miller wrote to ACT Planning and Land Management Minister Mick Gentleman Minister seeking urgent action to protect the well-being of owners and managers and asked the Government to allow **video conferencing**.

In a letter dated April 7, 2020, Mr Gentleman confirmed his plans to sign an **urgent regulation** exempting the ACT's Owners Corporations and Committees from the requirement to meet face-to-face.

"The ACT Legislative Assembly passed the **Unit Titles Legislation Amendment Bill 2019** in February and the amendments were due to come into effect in November 2020," Mr Miller said.

"The amendments include a number of provisions that would enable members of an Owners Corporation and/or Executive Committee to attend meetings via alternative means, such as by phone or video.

"SCA (ACT) believes that it is important to be able to carry out meetings via teleconference, video conference, email or other electronic means in the current circumstances where we should be limiting meetings and contact between people.

"We called on the Government to consider bringing forward these specific amendments ahead of the planned schedule.

"Given that Owners Corporations have a statutory obligation to hold meetings, it is critical to avoid a situation where the Executive Committee must choose between holding a meeting in a high-risk environment or being in breach of their duty under the act."

All SCA State and Territory presidents have been lobbying their respective governments to change legislation on face-to-face meetings and Mr Miller said he hoped other governments would follow the ACT's lead.

Mr Miller hailed it as a victory for common sense.

“The ACT Government is to be congratulated for acting swiftly on the concerns raised by the strata community,” Mr Miller said.

“There is a genuine need for owners and committees to get on with making important decisions about their communities, and this initiative from the government will enable that to occur in a safe and inclusive way.

“This is another example of the constructive relationship the SCA has enjoyed with the ACT Government and we are confident that future issues will receive a fair hearing as they arise.”

About Strata Community Association (ACT)

Strata Community Association (ACT) represents 85% of strata management practitioners in the Australian Capital Territory. It is the peak association supporting the strata sector in the Australian Capital Territory.

We are also affiliated with Strata Community Association (SCA), the national body representing strata management firms, unit owners, practitioners, tradespeople, insurers, bankers and other parties involved in the professional full time administration of strata schemes throughout the states and territories.

SCA (ACT) works with unit owners and practitioners in the strata industry in the Australian Capital Territory to provide professional development for members, ensure professional standards are maintained, provide protection to consumers, and assist the resolution of disputes between members and their clients.

Website: <https://www.strata.community/>

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