

DEALING WITH SHORT-TERM RENTAL DISPUTES WITHIN STRATA MANAGED BUILDINGS AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OWNERS

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ABSTRACT

The capital cities within Australia, have undergone significant growth in high-density multi-unit housing (HDMUH) in recent years. These HDMUH complexes are managed by a strata owners corporation consisting of an appointed manager along with representatives from the owners and tenants of the building. This study contributes to the understanding of the issues surrounding the dispute process that owners engage in, and the impact short-term rentals have on the level of disputes. The study adopted a mixed methods research approach. The research combined an in-depth review of the report database with an online survey employed to identify the common complaints and disputes in strata properties from the owner's perspective. This paper contributes to the body of knowledge around the resolution of complaints and disputes within HDMUH. With the rapid increase in short term stays within HDMUH, there is increasing pressure on owners corporations in dealing with complaints or disputes. This is an evolving area with much to be gained from a structured dispute resolution approach and regulations for short-term accommodation.

Keywords: strata, property management, disputes, short-term accommodation.

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INTRODUCTION

The volume of multi-unit high-density housing developments has significantly increased in capital cities across Australia over the last twenty years. Between 2004–2005 and 2018–2019, Victoria experienced the second-highest number of new high-rise and super-high-rise buildings (88,937 dwellings) (most of which are strata towers in Melbourne). The state of New South Wales (NSW), with Sydney as its capital, saw an increase of 428.8 per cent (5,793 dwellings) during these years (ABS, 2019). With the growth in such close living, there continue to be issues and concerns with the process around conflict resolution that can arise in the use and ownership of common spaces in multi-unit residential properties (Eathorpe et al., 2020). Various laws have been enacted to govern and control the growth of strata developments.

In the 1960s, worries about population growth and urbanisation led the government to explore alternative property ownership options for medium and high-density living. As a result, strata title, a new type of property title ownership, emerged to help realise this ambition (Forsythe and Antoniadis, 2014). Strata property titles are now the most common type of high-density residential property ownership in Australia. Strata is the cubic air space within an authorised border, such as an apartment (Strata Schemes-Freehold Development Act 1973, Section 5). It defines a "lot" of air space, which coexists with other lots to form a "strata scheme" for the overall complex. A strata scheme might represent a single building or a collection of buildings, and the scheme's size can range from two to over 1000 lots. The strata scheme might be residential, non-residential, or a combination. The ownership of the common property, for example, stairs and hallways, is shared amongst the owners of the lots, and the lot owners are collectively referred to as the "owners corporation".

Strata properties may be rented out for short stays, presenting a different and individual management layer for the lot owners, and the owners corporation. Short-stay rental accommodation (SSRA) refers to accommodation that falls in between visitor accommodation (e.g., hotels) and more formal long-term accommodation arrangements (e.g., property rentals). SSRA has existed for many decades as 'holiday lettings' but has proliferated into new geographical settings due to the emergence of Airbnb and other digital platforms.

Thus, while SSRAs are not a new phenomenon in Australia, the expansion of digital SSRA platforms merits further investigation, particularly regarding how lot owners renting out their strata properties deal with reported conflicts.

According to Forsythe and Antoniadou (2014), huge apartment buildings are similar to mini-communities, with diverse relationships and networks resulting in frequent complaints and disagreements. As a result, it is critical to investigate the processes involved in dealing with complaints about SSRA residents from the lot owners' perspective, as these owners are typically on the receiving end of these complaints. From the 1960s until the early 1980s, strata buildings were mostly three stories tall, did not require an elevator, and favoured common laundry facilities. In more recent years, with the introduction of medium and high-rise apartments, little thought was given to the architecture of the complex to encourage community life and harmony. As a result of the diverse relationships and networks that exist within an apartment complex, disagreements are prevalent. As with most personal disputes, the persons involved may face considerable emotional and financial costs.

According to Thomson (2023), despite the growth in strata tenure, there is still a great deal of silence in Australia concerning the lived experience of strata residents and owners concerning SSRA. Similarly, Forsythe and Antoniadou (2014) noted the need for research due to the limited literature on complaints and disputes in strata developments, as they considered complaints and disputes among apartment occupants. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap by exploring the processes adopted by property managers in dealing with nuisance complaints in strata developments and the implications these have on owners of SSRAs.

In this paper, we draw on survey data from strata property owners regarding renting out their properties for short-stay rentals, the type of complaints and the resolution of complaints. In our survey, undertaken in 2022, we asked strata property owners to identify key frustrations and pressure points and what might be needed to improve the current complaints process in strata (multi-unit condo) developments. We explore key issues of contention regarding short-stay residential accommodation (SSRA) and the processes in place (or not) to resolve them. This paper uses strata and owners corporation interchangeably. Understanding the lived experience is critical to developing well-designed processes and policies to support improved quality of life and housing in our urban centres. Sustainable urban growth models have higher density and strata titled by nature; hence, by identifying common sources of conflict in strata living, we can inform on strategies to mitigate those conflicts.

The paper first sets the context for strata/multi-unit condo living and the pre-litigation complaints processes available in Victoria, Australia, including for SSRA. A discussion of the research methodology adopted follows this. Then, findings from a substantive survey on complaints in strata developments undertaken with strata property owners are discussed. The paper concludes with recommendations for the multi-unit strata/condo sector for an independent complaints and education agency akin to an Ombudsman office.

Strata in Context

Living in high-rise private apartment buildings has become an increasingly accelerated tenure option in Australia (Nethercote, 2019). Douglas et al. (2016) noted that approximately three million Australians reside in strata-titled homes, with Melbourne and Sydney experiencing significant growth in development. Exploring the lived experiences of apartment residents is important, as this is a growing area of what Australians call home (Leshinsky & Mouat, 2015; Easthorpe, 2019). Over the past 25 years, the number of occupied apartments (including flats and units, excluding townhouses) in Australia increased by 78% to 1,214,372 dwellings in the 2016 Census (ABS, 2016). There were 10,852,208 private dwellings counted in the 2021 Census. 70 per cent of these were separate houses, 13 per cent were townhouses, 16 per cent were apartments and 1% "other" (Housing Census, 2021). These are ongoing concerns for living in strata/condominium high-density developments. These experiences contribute to real property on the ground – the "law of people and place". This perspective, as raised by Blandy et al. (2020), continues to be a highly underexplored area, with further data required from judgments and empirical studies. Each individual residential multi-owned development is a lab of new knowledge for high-density living environments, and this has been exasperated of late by defects and flammable cladding crises experienced in cities such as London and Melbourne (Oswald et al., 2021).

In Australia, strata title development systems date from the late 1960s (Sherry, 2016) and the system has been adopted by many other common law countries. In Australia, each state and territory has their own strata legislation, which carries some differences in style. Strata tenure and its related legislation enable shared

ownership and provide governance schemes for the owner's corporations holding joint assets, including common property. The relevant legislation for the state of Victoria is the *Owners Corporations Act 2006*, *Subdivision Act 1988* and their related regulations. Strata title also includes the vertical subdivision of land into lots and common property (Bugden, 2016). A subdivision plan shows the subdivision of land. Each parcel of the subdivided land is referred to as a lot, with each lot being capable of individual ownership. A lot is defined in the *Subdivision Act 1988* as a part of any land shown on a plan which can be disposed of separately and includes a lot or accessory lot (usually car parking spaces) on a registered plan strata subdivision. The boundaries of the lots are not defined by normal survey means but instead refer to the floors, walls, and ceilings of the subdivided building. In the state of Victoria, 'lots' is the modern term, and 'unit' is the older terminology.

Strata developments involve lots founded on a legal structure where some shared areas and services are jointly owned (Douglas et al., 2016). In Victoria, the legal entity managing the shared assets is known as the Owners Corporation (OC), which was formerly known as a Body Corporate. Due to the growth in strata developments, one in four Victorians live or are impacted by an owners corporation (SCA, 2023); hence, there is a need to better understand the lived experiences of residents and owners in strata developments.

In Victoria, an Owners Corporation (OC) is consequentially created when a subdivision plan containing common property is registered at Land Victoria, the titles office. They register and record applications received with a plan of subdivision or lodged following registration of the plan of subdivision. Lot owners make up the membership of the owners corporation for the subdivision.

The nature of strata ownership and its close quarter living environment increases the likelihood of disputes (Bugden, 2016). Disputes may commonly involve the Owners Corporation, although they can include other stakeholders such as lot owners, tenants, strata committee office bearers, or OC managers. They may even involve another strata scheme or the owner of an adjoining parcel in a part-building strata subdivision.

Disputes in strata developments can occur due to various issues and can damage harmonious living in the community. Moore's 1996 seminal work, "The Mediation Process", presented five types of conflicts - data, interest, structural, value and relationship. To elaborate on these five types, Moore (2014) identified probable causes for each conflict. They include:

- Relationship conflicts – caused by strong emotions, misperceptions or stereotypes, poor communication or miscommunication, and repetitive behaviour;
- Interest conflicts – caused by perceived or actual competition over substantive (content) interests, procedural interests, and psychological interests;
- Data conflicts – caused by lack of information, misinformation, different views on what is relevant, different interpretations of data, and different assessment procedures;
- Structural conflicts – caused by destructive patterns of behaviour or interaction, unequal control, ownership or distribution of resources, unequal power and authority, geographical, physical, or environmental factors that hinder cooperation;
- Time constraints and value conflicts – caused by different criteria for evaluating ideas or behaviour, exclusive, intrinsically valuable goals, different ways of life, ideology or religion.

Considering Moore's Circle of conflict theory, Kamarudin (2014) identified six grounds for strata scheme disputes. They include the nature of strata living itself, diversity of stakeholders, restrictive by-laws, lack of knowledge about strata living among stakeholders, negative attitudes and behaviour of occupants and lack of effective leadership in strata schemes. Furthermore, Leshinsky and Mouat (2012) cited five common types of strata disputes, such as owners' dissatisfaction with managers, arguments with the manager that may result from the initial contract entered by the developer, incompetent or recalcitrant members of the owners corporation that hindered decision-making, owners corporation acting against individual occupiers for breach of rules, and disagreement over owners corporation fee levels.

The fundamental characteristic of disputes being an outcome of a process has led traditional legal researchers to believe that dispute incidents can be avoided or at least moderated (Felstiner et al., 1981). Disputes that have been allowed to spiral and become unmanageable can damage the parties involved (Moore, 2014). As argued further by Moore (2014), mediation can assist in reconciling individual objectives with everyday needs and interests positively. This entails having an independent third party come in and mediate to reach agreements.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a mixed-methods research approach. It combined an in-depth review of a complaints database with an online survey to identify the common complaints and disputes in strata properties from the perspective of strata lot owners. The survey also included free-form answers to elicit views on having a possible third-party institution to address and settle such complaints and disputes.

An in-depth review of Strata Community Association (Vic) (SCAV) databases of complaints was conducted to assess what they could reveal about the nature and extent of complaints regarding strata lots. The database review was used to identify the complaint process and dispute resolution avenues used by SCAV.

The online survey was carried out in 2022, and the questions composed for the survey were written based on findings from focus groups held in 2021 with strata stakeholders. The study focused on high-rise residential privately-owned multi-unit towers, and strata property owners were recruited as respondents via the Strata Communities Australia, Victoria (SCAV). SCAV sent out a link to the survey in their weekly notice to prospective respondents. The link to an online survey using Qualtrics was distributed by the Strata Community Association (VIC) (SCAV) to their contact lists of Melbourne-based strata property owners. This method provided wider accessibility to participants and greater cooperation in engaging participants as it was difficult to find the contact details of strata property owners using a different recruitment method. The limitation of this method was the connection to the SCAV, however they were the most appropriate conduit as they have broad reach in the strata industry.

The survey questions explore strata property owners' views on the common complaints in their strata buildings, their experience with SSRA, experience and satisfaction with the current complaint management process, perceptions on the improvements required to the current complaint management process, and how a third-party institution such as strata Ombudsman office or Commissioner for strata complaints could and should operate in Victoria.

The survey opened on June 20, 2022, and closed on July 30, 2022. Three weeks after the commencement, a reminder was sent to possible participants who had not completed the survey by then. 115 lot owners responded to the online survey, with 87 being owner-occupiers. Of the owner-occupiers, 21 lived in high-rise properties, 50 lived in low to medium rise and 12 lived in master-planned estates. The remaining 28 were investor owners. Most of whom had tenants living in their properties.

The review of the documents phase of the study provided insight into the complaint processes and various avenues used by SCAV to resolve complaints. This was complemented by the survey, which sought to provide primary data from the property managers of strata properties on the complaints they receive, and efforts made to resolve them, including their views on SSRA.

The survey information was analysed and presented mainly using descriptive statistics such as percentages and contingency tables. Answers to open-ended questions in the survey were analysed using thematic analysis and presented qualitatively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The SCAV Complaints Process

The SCAV complaints process has several different avenues depending on whether it is the owner/tenant making a complaint or whether it is a complaint against the owner's corporation management (OCM) or owners corporation committee (OCC).

Complaints by tenants or owners can be either general day-to-day management related or complaints which are generally legislative or of a more serious nature with a breach of the SCAV Code of Conduct is first raised to the OC, which may then proceed to OCC / OCM. They can proceed to Strata Community Association (SCA) or Consumer Affairs Victoria if not resolved. If still unresolved after SCA or Consumer Affairs, the next and last resort is to go to VCAT. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many OC complaints/disputes have added to the workload of SCAV. The general day-to-day complaints are dealt with directly by the OC and may go through to the OCC or OCM for resolution.

Complaints regarding breaches of the SCAV Code of Conduct

Lot owners/tenants can complain through the official complaint form through Consumer Affairs, which is submitted directly to owners corporation manager (in accordance with the Owners Corporations Act 2006) rather than to SCA. The form goes to OCM, which may then go on to the committee for resolution. Source reports are that it was often a member of the committee that is the basis of the complaint, so it may not then be dealt with in an unbiased way. If the complaint proceeds to the committee to determine the resolution, this can also be a source of the complaint. Prior to the complaint going to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), lot owners/tenants can go to the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria, which is available to help resolve disputes.

Complaints made through Consumer Affairs Victoria

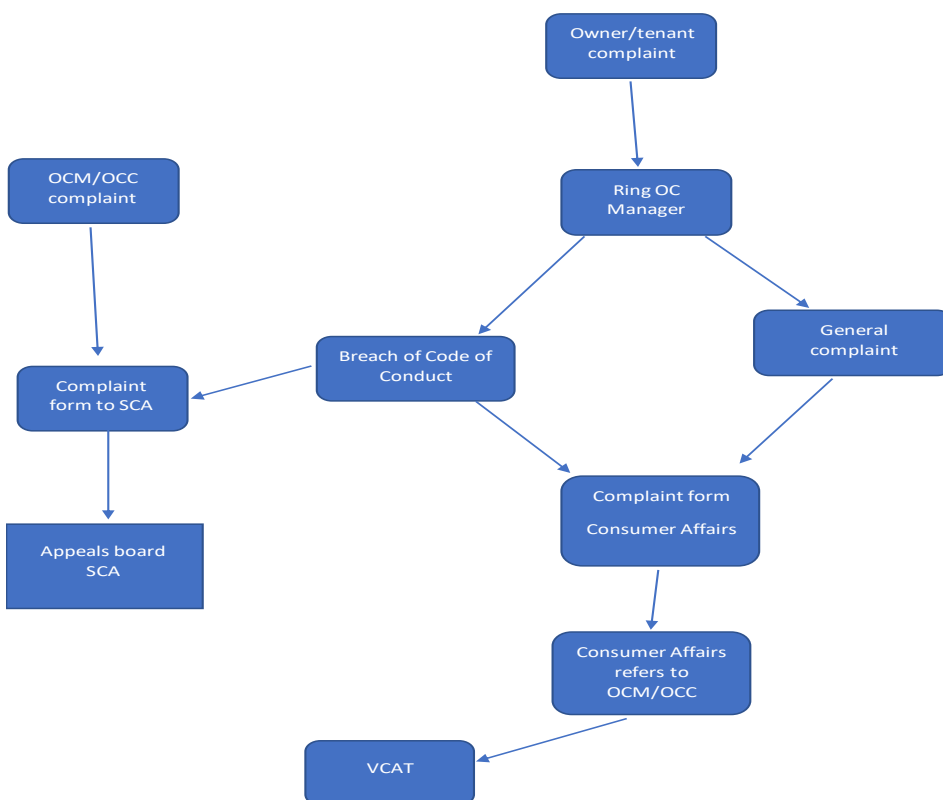
In Victoria, complaints made by owners/tenants are made directly to the OC Manager. These complaints can be through email or phone and should be resolved directly by the OCM with the assistance of the OCC. If the complaint is not dealt with to the complainant’s satisfaction, then a dispute arises, and it can then be lodged with Consumer Affairs Victoria.

The dispute follows a set process in the Owners Corporations Act and the Owners Corporations Regulations 2018, Model Rule for Owners Corporation. The first part of the process is completing the Owners Corporation complaint form, conveniently located online through Consumer Affairs. It is expected that the complainant has already raised this with OCM with no satisfactory outcome. The official complaint is then made, and the OC must formally reply in accordance with the model rules. Section 7 states that *If the dispute is not resolved, the grievance committee or owners corporation must notify each party of his or her right to take further action under Part 10 of the Owners Corporations Act 2006.*

The remedy under Part 10 of OCA allows for one of the following three outcomes;

- take no further action,
- remedy the breach
- proceed to VCAT.

Figure 1: Formal Complaint Avenues for Strata.



Complaints made to Strata Communities Association

Complaints by lot owners, tenants or managers are lodged through the SCA Complaints management form for a breach of the SCA code of conduct. These complaints are more formal in nature being breaches of code of conduct. There is a cost of \$250 per complaint lodgement, which is refunded if the complaint is upheld.

The SCA has a Code of Conduct complaints management process (Appendix 4) that is followed. This process has set timeframes to deal with the complaint, along with penalties that may be imposed if the breach is upheld. The panel will generally not consider any complaints against an SCA member (Strata Community Manager or Strata Services Member) who holds a contract with the Strata community without the minuted consent of the committee or the strata community (Strata Community Association, complaints management form, note 1).

SCA recommends a lot owner or occupier firstly attempt to resolve the issue via their strata committee. Complaints are generally not considered from parties (other than strata community or committee) unless a reasonable attempt has been made at self-resolution (SCA complaints management form, note 2).

The panels' ability to consider applications is significantly limited if consent is not provided to share the details of the complaint (SCA complaints management form, note 4).

Within the complaints form, complainants are requested to provide details of the complaint, including the relevant breach of the code of conduct, according to the SCA Professional Code of Conduct. SCA requires all members to be bound by the SCA Code of Practice, which was developed in 1990.

SCA complaints register is a relatively new process developed around 2018 and further amended in 2022 to incorporate an online form that is completed through SCA. The register is kept in a spreadsheet database provided to the authors by SCA. The databases include general queries along with a register of complaints.

The three different spreadsheet formats provided for this research were;

- Complaints register 2018-2020
- General query register 2022
- Code of conduct formal complaints register 2020- 2022

SCA deals with complaints lodged on the complaints form, and the resolution is conveyed back to the complainant in accordance with the SCA Complaints Management Process.

The interrogation of complaints held in the registers up until 2022 revealed that they are from OC Management committees only. Formal complaints must come from committee resolution and do not include complaints made directly from lot owners/tenants, as these were not included until 2022 when the complaints process was amended.

Most of the pre-2022 complaints are on legislative process breaches and breaches of professional conduct. The theme of these complaints focuses on:

- not administering the correct fee,
- not handing over documents,
- incorrect process and
- breaching ethical conduct (section 6 of the SCA Professional code of conduct)

From 2022 the register appears to be around information enquiries rather than complaints. Queries are evenly split between those received from lot owners (33%) and members (28%). However, a large number (38%) were unspecified as to the source of the query.

The time between receiving the query and resolving the query shows a fast resolution process, with 71% being resolved within one day and 86% within two weeks.

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Nearly all the complaints in the Code of Conduct register are against section six of the Code of Conduct, which is a breach of ethical conduct. From the records provided, most of these complaints concern not handing over the records/books on time and fees that are not charged correctly or withheld. Complaints are made via OC management and committee resolution, as owners/tenants could not make complaints directly to SCA until 2022. Formal complaints are dealt with at the SCA national level to avoid any potential conflict that could arise if the complaint were made against the state committee. Having complaints resolved at the national level should reduce the conflict of duties that would occur if they were trying to resolve their own breaches.

Owner survey responses regarding complaints

The respondents (owners) were asked if they had received any complaints and, if yes, to indicate the types of complaints they received. They stated they had been involved in strata corporation complaints. Table 1 below presents the responses of the lot owners.

Table 1 Common complaints received from lot owners:

Complaint type	If 'yes' Frequency	Yes %	Owner occupier	Owner investor
Car parking	80	69%	55	12
Unauthorised use of common areas	76	62%	49	14
Fees and levies too expensive	81	67%	54	14
Maintenance of common property	99	82%	69	17
Noise	81	67%	55	13
Management of utility service provision e.g., waste removal, electricity, gas, water etc	77	64%	52	12
Short-stay accommodation	63	52%	41	9

From Table 1 above, it can be shown that many of the respondents (lot owners) have been involved in complaints about their properties. Maintenance of common property, as seen in the table, with 99 respondents representing 82%, is the most common complaint. Short-stay accommodation accounted for 52% of the complaints. Responses are further broken down to show the common complaints in relation to short-stay accommodation.

Table 2: Common complaints on short stay accommodation

Activity related to short stay complaint	Yes Frequency	Yes %	Owner occupier	Owner investor
Noise	14	12%	14	0

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Parties	11	9%	11	0
Damage to common areas	9	7.4%	9	0
Dropping rubbish and cigarette butts from one floor to another	14	12%	14	0
Operating illegal or nuisance activities	4	3.3%	4	0
Other	1	.83%	1	0

Regulation of short-stay accommodation

Survey participants were asked about regulating the short-stay accommodation with most respondents (owners) preferring regulations to be introduced, with the owners corporation being responsible for administering it.

Table 3: Should there be regulations for a lot to be used as short-stay accommodation?

Regulation of short-stay	Frequency (percentage)	Owner occupier	Owner investor
Yes	66 (78%)	56	9
No	11 (13%)	5	6
Don't know	8 (9%)	6	2
Total	85	68	17

Table 4: Regulatory body preferences

Regulating body	Frequency	%
Federal Government	6	7%
State Government	17	20%
Local Government	12	14%
Owners corporation	32	37%
Self-regulated	13	15%

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Tables 3 and 4 show that 78% of the lot owners supported the idea of regulating short-term accommodations and 37% indicated the owners corporation as the body that should be responsible for this regulation. Of the respondents, 34% wanted either state or local government as the regulatory body for short-stay accommodation.

Furthermore, the consensus amongst respondents was that the short-stay accommodation host should be held accountable with 79% of the respondents indicating that the host for short-stay accommodations should be held accountable for the rule breaches and that this should be remedied by the owner/host within two hours.

However, if there is a breach and the owner/host does not address the matter, they consider that a fine should be imposed. The table below records owner respondents' preferences as to who should impose the fine on the short-stay host whose resident has breached a strata rule.

Table 5: Owner respondents' preferences as to who should impose a fine for breaches.

Who should impose a fine if Short-Stay host does not deal with the breach	Yes Frequency	%	Owner occupier	Owner investor
1=Owners corporation	36	42%	30	6
2= Local council	14	16%	11	3
3=Consumer Affairs	8	9%	8	0
5= Police	20	23%	16	4
6= Other	8	9%	4	4

There was a strong preference for the owners corporation to enforce a fee, followed by the police or the local council.

The need for a State Commissioner or Ombudsman office

Thirty-eight per cent (38%) of owner responses agree that an external agency would be very helpful, and only 6% say that it would be limited or not at all helpful. The consensus is for a strata Ombudsman office with low-level enforceable adjudication powers. In terms of dealing with building defects, owners considered that the following agencies could be involved.

Table 6: Which agencies could be involved regarding defects

Building defects	Frequency	%
Strata Commissioner	16	23
Strata Ombudsman office	31	45

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Consumer Affairs Victoria	15	21
Other	7	10

Respondents had multiple views regarding how these agencies should be funded.

Table 7: How agencies should be funded

Preferred funding of agencies	Overall agree	% agree (can be multiple responses)	Owner occupier	Owner investor
A proportion of strata levies and fees should cover their funding	43	36%	36	7
A proportion of property and strata managers' registration fees should cover their funding	51	42.5%	44	7
The state government should cover their funding	51	42.5%	42	9
The local government should cover their funding	40	33.3%	35	5
Victoria Property Fund should cover their funding	51	42.5%	43	8
Other (Please state)	8	6.7%	7	1

In Table 6, the majority of respondents indicated that an independent external agency responsible for complaints and dispute resolution would be helpful. This agency could take up the additional responsibility of addressing a significant source of complaints, maintenance, and defects (as indicated in Table 1). 31 respondents, representing 45%, asserted that the strata ombudsman office should be involved in dealing with maintenance and defects. They further noted, as seen in Table 7, that the agency should be funded by the Victoria Property Fund, the state government and the registration fees of the property and strata managers.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Literature shows us that strata ownership and the close quarters living environment heighten the chance of disagreements between residents (Bugden, 2016). Resident and owner disputes are most usually resolved by the owners corporation or strata property managers. The dispute may also involve another strata scheme or the

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owner of an adjacent parcel in a part-building strata subdivision. In the case of SSRA, complaints reported are often related to the (mis) behaviour of the short-stay tenants.

The review of the complaint process of SCAV was also to inform the available external resources for addressing issues in Victoria, especially issues that may not be solved at the owners corporation level. SCA has established a complaints process that enables OCM and OCC to register their complaints and for SCA to provide a resolution. This should avoid conflict of interest, where the complaint is potentially being raised to the body that is the subject of the complaint. The process has been less robust for lot owners and tenants, with a complaint being raised to the OC. If the OC does not agree or is the subject of the complaint, then the owner/tenant must go to Consumer Affairs, who also returns the complaint to the OC. If it is still unresolved, it can go to VCAT, which is a lengthy process, and it is expected that most complainants will give up, given the additional stress and prolonged timeframe. In 2022, this process was added to, with the allowance of owners/tenants being able to raise complaints directly to SCA.

The survey examined the views of strata property/lot owners, including their views on complaints regarding SSRA and how a strata Ombudsman office or Commissioner for pre-litigation strata complaints could operate in Victoria. The survey had 115 respondents from lot owners.

The popularity of SSRA is rising in Australia, which is consistent with other jurisdictions where there are no licencing and strong regulatory frameworks on using apartments as short-term rentals (Nieuwland et al. 2020). Undoubtedly, concerns and complaints about SSRA accommodation will persist in the future. As a result, there is a significant opportunity for close collaboration with state governments and local municipalities on SSRA accommodation registration and regulation. However, this will result in monitoring, compliance, enforcement concerns, and high expenses connected with these processes (Schatz & Leshinsky, 2018). Effective complaint recording is crucial for recognising ongoing issues and concerns about short-term stays.

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