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Attention Chiefs of Staff / Editors / Property Editors

### **TWO STOREY TODDLER FALL PROMPTS CALLS FOR NEW WINDOW SAFETY LAWS IN QUEENSLAND TO WIPE OUT “DEATH TRAP WINDOWS”**

### **NATIONAL STATS SHOW ONE CHILD A WEEK FALLS FROM A WINDOW**

### **WINDOW RESTRICTION DEVICES SAVE LIVES, AND MUST BE COMPULSORY IN QUEENSLAND - STRATA BOSSES SAYS**

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The news of a toddler falling two storeys from a window at a Sunshine Coast apartment has prompted urgent calls from strata property leaders, to see “death trap windows” eliminated from apartments and units statewide.

The fall occurred on one of the last days of September school holidays, and ahead of another major school holiday period this summer, leaders are calling for action from State Government decision makers. (Article attached)

The peak body for strata property in Queensland is adamant that new laws need to be considered by the State Government immediately, to see window restriction devices featured on all openable windows in high rise properties.

They say Queensland is desperately lagging behind in window safety compared to states down south and the laws set to be introduced in New South Wales in 2018, serve as the perfect model for better window safety.

In 2014, the New South Wales State Government announced new window safety laws under a “Kids Don't Fly” campaign to address recent accidents and tragedies following window falls.

Strata Community Australia (Qld) is the peak industry body for Body Corporate and Community Title Management in Queensland and Vice President James Freestun says this is a problem that needs urgent fixing.

“Simply put, openable windows in multi-storey strata properties are potential death traps waiting to happen,” Mr Freestun said today.

“Queensland families not only holiday in strata properties but nowadays, a big number of them also call apartments and units home, and there needs to be stricter window safety laws in place to address this.”

“The work done in New South Wales to see this issue addressed is the perfect example for the Queensland State Government to work off and we hope this recent accident sees some action stem from it.”

Mr Freestun says much to the discomfort of strata leaders, this isn't an area that has been investigated too intently by research bodies in Queensland, but the statistics for New South Wales outline just how dangerous this issue can be.

“According to NSW health data, between 2011 and 2012, 39 children aged nine or younger were hospitalized due to falls from windows.”

“Around the country, the stats detail that one child a week falls from a window and the Children's Hospital Westmead has on record that 80% of these falls result in serious injuries.”

Mr Freestun says the advice from experts is that falls occur more often in the warmer months when windows and doors to balconies are left open both during the day and at night, so this most recent accident must be a wakeup call for State Government decision makers, ahead of the summer period.

“It's understandable in the Queensland heat that windows get opened, but there needs to be tighter controls on what kinds of windows are legal, and how far windows can be opened in strata properties.”

“No one is suggesting that windows be glued shut, but window restriction devices save lives and must be compulsory in Queensland, sooner rather than later.”

Mr Freestun says SCA (Qld) has been working closely with New South Wales counterparts in understanding how they went about seeing new laws passed and look forward to consulting with Queensland State Government on this ever important issue.

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