

Media Release

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Attention Editor/Property Editor/Chief of Staff

DESIGN, NOT SIZE MATTERS IN SMALL APARTMENTS DEBATE

ACTION NEEDED FROM [REDACTED] GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT POORLY DESIGNED 'DOGBOXES' IN STRATA

The peak body for the strata sector in Australia is calling on the [REDACTED] Government to review local building design standards to prevent the growing market for smaller apartments from resulting in high-rise “dogboxes” – slang for tiny and poor quality living spaces. (Editor Note - See attached article)

New South Wales and Victoria are currently in the process of finalising such reviews and Strata Community Australia (SCA) wants measures in place in [REDACTED] to ensure quality living spaces.

Reflecting micro living trends and a nationwide apartment boom, apartments offering as little as 35 square metres of living area are now emerging throughout Australian strata title property.

Strata Community Australia stresses it is not against smaller living areas – provided that quality and functionality are not compromised.

“High density living is the future of Australia's cities, so it's important the buildings are regulated by common sense laws,” Strata Community Australia CEO Kim Henshaw and [REDACTED] President/Spokesperson said today.

“We don't want to see the emergence of cheap and nasty apartment “dogboxes” that are the hallmark of some apartment metropolis' overseas.”

“With the right design and innovation, Australian construction is well and truly capable of meeting the needs and wants of property stakeholders so we encourage the prioritising of design, rather than bigger living.”

In New South Wales, Planning Minister Rob Stokes has confirmed Government support for what is reportedly known as the builders rule of thumb, specifying 35 square metres for studios, 50 square metres for one-bedroom apartments and 70 square metres for two-bedroom apartments.

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"We are certainly pleased by the decision in New South Wales to not increase minimum apartment size but we want legislation all around the country to reflect a great deal more than size," Mr Henshaw and [REDACTED] said.

Nationally, 40% of new dwellings are now apartments or units, and this figure is only going up, so SCA is adamant there needs to be action on this beyond the two states in question.

"We understand that for design to be prioritised over space, building standards must be closely examined and monitored; so we are calling on the [REDACTED] Government to take this into consideration immediately in the form of a review."

"We are hearing that the already active Victorian review will reportedly not be completed until the middle of next year so we implore [REDACTED] Government officials to give this matter some urgency," Mr Henshaw and [REDACTED] said.

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About Strata Community Australia

Strata Community Australia Limited (SCA) is the peak industry body for Body Corporate and Community Title Management in Australia. Membership includes body corporate managers, support staff, committee members and suppliers of products and services to the industry. SCA proudly fulfils the dual roles of a professional institute and consumer advocate. SCA has in excess of 3,300 members who help oversee, advise or manage a combined property portfolio with an estimated replacement value of over \$1.2 trillion.

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