

National Association to represent resident managers
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The formation of a national resident managers' association came a step closer with several NSW management rights groups coming together to form ARAMA (NSW) Inc.

A meeting was held in Sydney on February 1 attended by representatives of the various chapters of the NSW Management Rights Association, the Merimbula Holiday Association and QRAMA.

Currently in NSW the main association representing resident managers is the Management Rights Association of NSW, which is based in Sydney but has a Mid North Coast (Port Macquarie) chapter and a Byron Northern Rivers chapter. There is also the separate Merimbula Holiday Association.

These groups have agreed to become aligned into one organisation representing NSW resident managers.

The NSW group will adopt the name ARAMA (NSW) Inc and will adopt an adapted version of the QRAMA Constitution.

NSW will establish their association under the ARAMA banner and progress their urgent issues while still being linked with QRAMA and preparing for a national ARAMA when resources allow.

There was unanimous acceptance amongst the various NSW representatives that the model established by QRAMA should be the basis for the new NSW body and later, a national body.

The new organisation will form with about 100 members comprised of a Sydney group consisting of 20 financial members, a group on the Mid North Coast at Coffs Harbour with 13 member complexes, a Byron Northern Rivers group of 18 and another group at Merimbula with close to 50 members.

The meeting resolved that, subject to acceptance by members of QRAMA and the MRA, a national body would be established.

Hence the foundation has been set for the formation of a national body ARAMA - Australian Resident Accommodation Managers' Association.

We are not ready to take that step yet and there is a lot of work to be done to establish the NSW group, which is the first priority.

It was anticipated that once ARAMA was established and operational, further state associations would be formed as the opportunities and needs arise.

These matters follow agreement after considerable discussion at the 2005 QRAMA State AGM that QRAMA supports a national presence and that QRAMA should work with other groups as appropriate to establish that national body.

It is proposed that each state body would retain its regional branches to deal with local issues (following the model of the current structure of QRAMA) and the individual state bodies of ARAMA will deal with state issues.

Several national models have been discussed. The need for a broader, national focus is recognised and the management rights industry will be stronger and negotiate better with legislators if there is a national picture.

One of the major drivers behind the formation of a national association is the commonality of issues for resident managers throughout the country and the common concern on the issues that need attention.

For example, the state legislation has taken a fragmented approach to management rights and there is no link between strata property legislation and tourism.

There is a common need to understand how to approach government to address industry issues, methods to increase the membership base and a common need to look at funding sources.

ARAMA will be responsible for coordinating and sharing information on these common issues between resident managers throughout the country, as well as negotiating benefits and services with various suppliers on a national basis.

It is important to remember negotiations on legislative issues are focused mainly on state government departments and a state body is needed to tackle these matters, and the state body must have commitment from the grass roots membership base to ensure important matters are brought to the attention of government.

However, a national body will allow for the development of a more consistent political lobbying strategy and attention to national issues.

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President Talk

By Kim Cox – State President

INDUSTRY EXPANDS AND WE NEED TO BE READY

This year is shaping to be a major watershed for the resident managers of Queensland and the highlight is the next review of the Body Corporate and Community Management Act.

QRAMA continues to emphasise the need for the State Government to work with the industry to ensure the legislation is strategic, rather than dealing with the industry issues in retrospect as was required in the last century.

There has been a positive initiative by the Government to work with QRAMA, the Community Titles Institute of Queensland and the Unit Owners Association of Queensland collaboratively on industry issues.

Next month the third annual stakeholders' seminar tour will meet with audiences across the state as part of an ongoing education and awareness program for the industry.

This engagement program has become an important element in consistently meeting with members and a broader group of interested people.

Fortunately QRAMA is being supported by other stakeholders in Queensland and also by our colleagues in NSW who are seeking our advice and support to help develop their state-wide branch.

In this newsletter we also provide members with news on the expansion of the Association with a more formal structure being developed in NSW, drawing on the QRAMA model.

I am sure this will lead to further maturity in our organisation, as well as in the broader management rights industry.

Developing cross-border links with our neighbours in the industry will assist in the development of a more consistent approach to government and policy makers.

We would like to see greater national uniformity in our industry, as many problems are created by the inconsistency of laws and regulations between states.

Indeed the program generated at the Griffith University sponsored national strata and community title conference last year seems to have impressed the Council of Australian Governments to the extent that they have agreed to support national education programs and the breakdown of industry legislative differences in the various states.

Governments at state and federal level are recognising that strata and community title projects are now emerging as a likely solution to the management needs of Australia's growing city and regional population boom.

The growth is being fuelled by the desire of many Australians to live in lifestyle-based accommodation and in locations close to existing infrastructure.

The growth of new inner-city apartment blocks in all capital cities, the major urban revitalisation programs in capital and historic regional cities, and sea-change destinations are all creating new property products for Australians. The new projects include whole suburbs being created and managed under community title.

The BCCM Act, which is being reviewed this year, needs to reflect these new schemes and opportunities.

The roles for body corporate managers and resident managers are becoming increasingly complex.

At times, they will become responsible for the maintenance of the roads, footpaths, storm water and wastewater within new communities, replacing the traditional role for the local authorities and their current ratepayer structure.

It is necessary for the legislation to consider the issues of all stakeholders and strike an appropriate balance that addresses the industry's concerns.

QRAMA members need to think strategically about their buildings and properties and the future challenges they identify as needing clarity and certainty.

QRAMA produced a 54-page submission to the last review of the Act concluded in 2003 and continues to highlight the key issues that are still to be addressed by the State Government.

We have some very important commercial issues that need to be finalised to ensure our owners and our own business interests are recognised and strengthened.

When we face some of the difficulties of the industry, we see some around us resort to dispute processes and escalation of problems.

These tactics may seem appropriate for those who cannot make a positive contribution, but we all need some clear thinking and positive solutions to address the industry's challenges.

I urge all members to support their regional branches in addressing the key regional issues at this time so that QRAMA can continue to play a proactive role in ensuring the key legislation under which we operate recognises the realities that are required for good resident management practice. There are billions of dollars of owners' assets that have to be maintained, protected and enhanced.

There is a watershed emerging, as the traditional role of resident management is being challenged by the emergence of corporate organisations who are offering staff management with a commitment to shareholders as well as their clients.

Management rights is seen as a growth industry, therefore it is important for managers to ensure they maintain control of the direction of their industry and business by being involved in the process that directly affects their future.

Accommodation Module Nightmare Revisited

By John Mahoney, Partner Mahoney Lawyers

Most readers of this publication will be aware of a recent decision of the Body Corporate Commissioner's Office setting aside the transfer of a Gold Coast beachfront holiday complex to the Accommodation Module.

Of the **45 lots** in the complex, **28 were let out**, 25 by the on-site manager and 3 by external agents. The remaining 17 lots were owner occupied (one of these being the manager's lot) and/or locks up. So **62% of all lots were "accommodation lots"** for the purposes of the Accommodation Module Regulation.

The Body Corporate **resolved by special resolution** at a General Meeting to **transfer to the Accommodation Module**. A disgruntled owner occupier who opposed the transfer to the Accommodation Module lodged an **objection in the Body Corporate Commissioner's office** challenging this and a number of other motions.

The Regulation Module requires that the lots in the scheme have to be **predominately accommodation lots at the time of the meeting**. An accommodation lot is one that is **let out** or immediately available for letting out, whether **for long or short term residential purposes**. The meaning of the word "**predominately**" had to be determined.

The Adjudicator determined that **the Accommodation Module did not apply to a scheme where a "bare majority" of lots were accommodation lots**. He found that **the number of accommodation lots must prevail or have supremacy over the non-accommodation lots**.

He went on to find that **for lots in a scheme to be predominately accommodation lots, at least 75% of lots must be accommodation lots**. That is despite the fact that a special resolution otherwise only requires a two thirds majority (66.66%) of owners voting to support it (until December 2003, only 50%) provided no more than 25% of all eligible voters oppose it.

So despite the fact that 62% of all lots were accommodation lots i.e. the accommodation lots outnumbered the non-accommodation lots by more than 1.5 to 1 and an overwhelming majority of owners voted in favour of the change of module, **the Commissioner's office ruled that the complex does not qualify for the Accommodation Module**. The

effect of the finding is that **unless the accommodation lots outnumber the non-accommodation lots by 3 to 1 or more, the complex does not qualify for the Accommodation Module**.

Whilst the decision does not form a binding precedent, the practice of the Commissioner's Office is to follow previous decisions. This decision has **incredibly wide reaching ramifications for our industry**. It has the potential to adversely affect any complex in the Accommodation Module where less than 75% of lots are let out.

QRAMA has approached the Department to have the matter reviewed and it is **possible** that the legislation could be amended. In the meantime, a lot of unnecessary uncertainty has been created. If the decision is correct then **any complex which adopted the Accommodation Module is no longer eligible to be or remain in that Module if at the time it adopted the Module there were not at least 3 times as many accommodation lots as non-accommodation lots**. Further, any **management or letting agreements** entered into since the adoption of the Accommodation Module for more than 10 years may in fact be **limited to only 10 years**.



It would be reasonable to estimate that around 80% of complexes that have adopted the Accommodation Module would have less than 75% accommodation lots. So the **implications of the decision are obvious and extensive**. So what is the answer? **Legislative change is the most obvious answer**. Given that a special resolution is already required to be able to change Modules, any legislative change should simply require that a majority of lots be accommodation lots i.e. more than 50%. The change will still require that a 2/3 majority of voters vote in favour of the change and that no more than 25% of all eligible voters oppose it.

Whilst considering such a change, the Government should also consider another change. At the moment if a complex consists

of a number of different types of lots, e.g. commercial and residential, all of the lots are taken into account when determining if they are predominantly accommodation lots. Commercial lots can never be accommodation lots as they can not be let out for residential purposes.

[Continue on page 4]

Queensland industry group alliance

The Queensland resident management and community title industry has implemented an innovative approach to maximising relationships.

As a joint initiative, QRAMA has joined forces with the Community Titles Institute of Queensland and the Unit Owners Association of Queensland to represent industry issues to State government.

The collaborative alliance presents a bigger representation base on common issues, enabling an efficient approach to addressing those concerns.

As Queensland is continuing to pursue legislation change and review, with many stakeholder groups invested in the change, the approach taken by these three bodies is both commonsense and efficient for government lobbying.

PAMDA amendments update – Assignment of Appointments

Amendments to the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act (PAMDA) were approved by Queensland Parliament on 9 March to provide for the assignment of an appointment of a resident letting agent by an owner (client) when the resident manager sells his management rights to a new resident manager.

The revised requirement is provided in an amendment to Section 114(1) and a new section 115A. Previously PAMDA was silent on the issue and while OFT showed some flexibility in handling the matter, there was always doubt about the timing and procedures.

Section 114 gives resident managers two choices. Either, the resident letting agent:

- Prepares a new Form 20A Appointment which the owner signs before the new letting agent can act for the owner; or
- The previous appointment signed by the owner with the outgoing letting agent is assigned to the new letting agent.

If the assignment choice (b) is made, this can be done in one of two ways:

- The previous appointment is assigned to the new letting agent in the terms of that appointment; or
- If the existing appointment does not include a clause that authorises assignment of the appointment, the processes in Section 115A must be followed.

Now that these changes have been made, we cannot expect the same flexibility by OFT inspectors. Infringement notices are more likely to be issued for letting without a current appointment.

The penalty of 200 penalty points for letting property without a signed appointment means a fine of up to \$15,000.

A suitable assignment clause that satisfies these requirements is included in the recommended QRAMA Addendum to Form 20A Appointments, which can be sourced by QRAMA members from <http://www.qrama.com.au/library/pamda.htm>.

If this clause or a similar clause is included in the appointment and the appointment has been signed by the owner, the revised Section 114(1) is satisfied as well as Section 115A(2). Otherwise, the new section 115A must be addressed.

Each owner has a choice of appointing the RLA to act for them. While in theory the owner can consider whether they will have the new resident manager act as their letting agent, the choice at the time of change of letting agents is usually meaningless as the owner will most likely make a better choice after they have worked with the new resident manager.

The incoming resident manager should have satisfied the police checks arranged by the Office of Fair Trading, completed the specified training course and met the committee. These checks are more extensive than an individual owner would normally apply and should be sufficient to assign the appointment.

The owner still has the right under PAMDA Section 114(4) to revoke the appointment on 30 to 90 days notice (depending on the appointment) and so the assignment clause does not negate this right.

The most effective arrangement for owners and letting agents is for appointments to include an assignment clause that will satisfy Section 114(1)(b).

If an appointment does not include such a clause, QRAMA recommends that such a clause be added now so that when it is time to assign the appointment, correct arrangements are in place and owners maintain continuity of letting income.

If a new manager has to wait for new Form 20A Appointments to be signed or for the written assignment requirements of Section 115A (3) to be met, they do not have authority to let the property until a suitable arrangement is confirmed in writing.

It is probable the property should not be let during this time or that no disbursements are made from the trust account until an appointment or an assignment is confirmed in writing.

It is in the interest of both parties to have these items addressed and avoid the extra paperwork and delays that a lack of an assignment clause can cause.

Accommodation Module Nightmare Revisited By John Mahoney, Partner Mahoney Lawyers

[From page 4]

So where there are a large number of commercial lots such as in a complex in Surfers Paradise in which I am acting at the moment (where there are more than 90 commercial lots out of 177 in total), even if many more of the residential lots are accommodation lots than not, the complex can never be in the Accommodation Module. To solve this anomaly, **the requirement in the Act ought to be that a majority of residential lots in the scheme are accommodation lots.**

If there is not to be legislative change, then the issue is likely to raise its head again in another complex. As the original decision has not been appealed against, **we do not know how the matter will be dealt with by a Court rather than just the Commissioner's Office in the future.** However I am confident that if properly challenged the decision will not stand up to scrutiny.

Previous judicial decisions involving the interpretation of "predominant" may be helpful to some extent. In one New South Wales decision, the

comment was made that it must be "**more than 50%**" and must be "**the most conspicuous or effective**" portion. Even if that approach had been adopted, I think it would have led to a different result in the particular case. However, I still do not think that it is a workable approach. What if a complex is branded and marketed as a holiday complex (so that the use of the complex as holiday let units is its most conspicuous or effective use), but in fact only 49 of the 100 units are let out? Or vice versa?

A **proper approach** to the interpretation of the word "predominantly", having regard to the context in which it is used in the legislation, the now relative minor differences between the Modules and the requirement for a special resolution to change Modules, is that a **majority** of accommodation lots constitutes predominantly accommodation lots. If there is not to be legislative change, **let's hope that this practical and common sense approach will be taken in the future.**

QRAMA Branch Activities

Sunshine Coast branch

A free information night was held for QRAMA members on Wednesday 15th February 2006 at the Maroochy Shore Surf Club.

The program for the night included speakers from the Queensland Police Tactical Response Group, who discussed methods for dealing with problems such as suspicious guests and drug manufacture in units.

The information night also featured a speaker from the Office of Fair Trading, who discussed RLA Licence issues and what OFT expects of RLAs. Proposed changes to legislation and OFT regulations were also discussed, providing members with a clear outline of what to expect following reviews of the PAMDA and BCCM legislation.

Di O'Shea from Quality Matters Pty Ltd spoke on website development, delivering a proposal for the development of members' websites with a focus on marketing your building.

The Sunshine Coast branch has also just closed off their Costs and Charges Survey for 2006. The report should be available to members who participated by late May.

Every two years the Sunshine Coast branch has conducted a survey of members to gather a picture of the costs and charges associated with operating as a resident manager as well as developing an industry profile on practices. Invitations to participate this year have been sent to all members from Port Douglas to the Sunshine Coast as well as Brisbane members who are involved in short-term or holiday letting. Gold Coast members are about to participate in a similar survey.

The survey gathers data on all activities handled by members. It also asks respondents to detail charges to guests. It does not attempt to review tariffs as the varying factors involved need more expert analysis to quantify the many factors involved.

QRAMA does not set recommended charges but members who contribute to the report receive not only median charges for items surveyed but also ranges of costs and charges. Charges will vary by "star" rating and other factors. The report also shows choices made by members on marketing arrangements and industry practices.

The surveys provide valuable information and data to those members who chose to invest the time in participating in the survey and the number of responses received so far has been encouraging.

Gold Coast branch

The Gold Coast branch of QRAMA held an information seminar for QRAMA members and management rights industry owners about the latest RTA review on March 22 in Mermaid Waters.

The turn out was very impressive, with 150 managers from across the Gold Coast attending the seminar. QRAMA Gold Coast President Ron Jungblut spoke about some of the issues facing managers, especially transfer fees and GST along with the upcoming review of the Residential Tenancies Act.

Kevin Francis spoke as a manager of long term let properties and discussed how he and Steve Gugenberger became involved in QRAMA. Kevin said they saw the association as the best vehicle to deal with issues and needs of managers in permanent letting.

Allen Munck of the Residential Tenancies Authority then gave a 45 minute presentation on the various parts and functions of the Residential Tenancies Authority, along with the obligations of managers in regard to tenancy matters. This was followed by a very interesting question and answer half-hour where many managers expressed some of their concerns.

The seminar provided resident managers with valuable information regarding what they can do to assist the RTA, particularly by avoiding common problems regarding the submitting of forms to the Authority.



Gold Coast seminar presentation

BCCM Seminars

The Office of Body Corporate and Community Management will be conducting a series of seminars throughout the state in May and June 2006 for resident managers, unit owners and body corporate managers.

The seminars will focus on the theme 'Back to Basics' and have been developed by the BCCM Commissioner's Office in conjunction with QRAMA, CTIQ and UOAQ. Representatives of each of the four groups will speak.

The seminars will be held throughout Queensland during late May and early June. Final details of venues are not yet available at the time of going to press but locations have been agreed. The seminar in each location will commence at 9.30 am and with a question/ discussion time included, is expected to conclude by 1.00 pm.

The locations are:

Mooloolaba	Wednesday 17 May
Ipswich	Thursday 18 May
Cairns	Monday 22 May
Townsville	Tuesday 23 May
Mackay	Wednesday 24 May
Rockhampton	Thursday 25 May
Kedron	Tuesday 30 May
Broadbeach	Wednesday 31 May
Coorparoo	Thursday 1 June
Redcliffe	Friday 2 June
Hervey Bay	Tuesday 6 June

Resident managers urged to maintain smoke alarms

The Queensland Fire & Rescue Service is encouraging all Queensland householders, tenants, landlords and business owners who have battery-powered smoke alarms to change batteries once a year.

According to the Fire Service, the moment a smoke alarm is installed and operating, the occupants of properties have immediate protection. By comparison, the risk of a fire death in homes without a working smoke alarm is up to three times higher than for homes with alarms.

However, battery-powered smoke alarms need to be regularly checked to ensure they are operating correctly.

The QFRS warns that smoke, not flame or heat, kills the majority of fire victims.

"As people sleep, their sense of smell is diminished and they may not become aware of smoke. In addition, smoke puts occupants into a deeper sleep, so the loud sound of a smoke alarm becomes a critical warning for the occupants of houses, units or flats," QFRS said.

The resident manager, who is appointed by the owner to carry out work, is usually responsible for maintaining smoke alarms in units.

Therefore QRAMA members are encouraged to maintain each battery-powered smoke alarm in units in their building by regularly checking it is working and replacing the battery once a year.

QFRS recommends that smoke alarms are tested and cleaned with a vacuum cleaner each month. Batteries should be replaced each year with the long-lasting alkaline type.

One reason for the campaign is research showing that only 76 percent of householders replace their smoke alarm batteries regularly. Nearly five percent of smoke alarms don't work because the battery is dead or has been removed. QRAMA is concerned that in holiday premises, a guest who is annoyed by an alarm "beeping" frequently due to a low battery removes the battery to remove the noise source but does not always advise the resident manager of the action taken.

Working smoke alarms offer the best warning against fire and under the Building Code of Australia all homes built after 1997 are required to have mains-wired smoke alarms installed.

However, as there is currently no legal requirement for most pre-1997 houses and units to have smoke alarms installed, Parliament is about to review the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990.

It is expected that from 1 July 2007, all homes and residential units, irrespective of the date of construction, will be required to have at least one battery-operated smoke alarm if they do not have a mains-wired smoke alarm.

An increasing number of buildings have adopted hardwired smoke alarm systems, but many buildings still operate with individual battery-powered alarms in each unit.

Resident managers should request that guests or tenants do not damage the smoke alarm in any way (such as painting over it) or disarm it by removing the battery.

Smoke alarms provide a vital early warning mechanism that can save not only property but could also save lives. Therefore ensuring they are operating effectively should be an important consideration as part of an overall fire safety system.



Spa tragedy highlights danger

An eleven-year-old girl died tragically after becoming trapped underwater in a spa at a holiday resort on the NSW North Coast in March. The girl had reportedly been diving underwater in the pool.

This accident occurred just two weeks after a near-drowning in a home spa in a Sydney suburb when an eight-year-old girl had her hair caught in a spa suction return.

Unfortunately this is not the first such tragic accident in a spa pool. Spa pools appear to offer such great fun but can so easily be the scene for a tragedy.

These latest incidents highlight the dangers inherent in spa and swimming pools, and the associated duty of care the resident manager has in ensuring safety in and around swimming and spa pools.

In the QRAMA website library, we have an article under Recommended Practices headed "Safety Alert - Spa Pools" with advice from the Workplace Health and Safety following a fatal accident in Noosa in 2001.

We strongly advise members to work through the points raised in the article by WHS Queensland and ensure they and their body corporate follow the recommendations.

In particular, check the signage around spa pools and ensure that each user of every spa is advised in the strongest terms that they must not put their head below the water level in a spa. The WHS advice also covers safety switches and alarms.

These accidents happen so easily but by following WHS advice, the risks at your complex can be reduced.

Dealing with Fair Trading Inspectors

Random spot checks by Fair Trading Inspectors are carried out frequently throughout the state, therefore it is important to understand the process as well as your rights and obligations.

The Office of Fair Trading has released advice on how to deal with Fair Trading inspectors when they inspect your business premises.

Fair Trading Inspectors visit businesses to monitor compliance, resolve disputes and enforce compliance with legislation and regulations.

Under fair trading laws inspectors are generally authorised to enter an area if:

- the occupier consents; or
- authorised by a warrant; or
- it is a public place where entry is open to the public

If a trader breaks the law Fair Trading Inspectors have the legal power to:

- Collect evidence - including confiscating any equipment or goods that can be used as evidence
- Interview alleged offenders - traders are required to give their correct name and address and produce documents required under the law
- Issue a warning - inspectors can issue a letter cautioning traders of specific breaches and requesting them to immediately solve the problem
- Issue infringement notices - a fine for minor breaches of legislation can be issued

Fair Trading Inspectors cannot accept payment for any fees and are required by law to produce photo identification.

Traders who are dissatisfied with the outcome should firstly try to resolve the matter with the Office of Fair Trading. If they are still unhappy they should contact the Queensland Ombudsman to review the outcome on (07) 3005 7000.

Investigations and random spot checks on Resident Letting Agents typically involve checking RLAs are licensed and that the licensee's name is displayed in a prominent position, ensuring a complaint handling procedure is in place, the house rules are reasonable and fair and a Code of Conduct notice is on display.

Fines for misconduct can be up to \$15,000 for individuals and \$75,000 for corporations, therefore QRAMA members are advised strongly to ensure they comply with industry regulations.



Issues to consider

By Di O'Shea – Quality Matters Pty Ltd

As a result of meeting with some members on the Sunshine Coast recently, I was reminded of several issues about which I have written before and all of which continue to cause problems.

This article is not big enough to give you the answers but by listing these questions it may encourage you to discuss them with other managers or contact someone who may be able to help.

The important thing to realise is that you are not alone if you are unsure of any of the answers or know that you have a problem.

Please consider each question and address it if necessary.

1. Domain names:

- a. Do you own yours? (You must be the Registrant)
- b. Do you need more than one? (No – unless there is a very good reason)
- c. Can you sell it? (You must transfer it to another acceptable legal entity)

2. Web sites:

- a. Is it being found? (If not, you are losing a lot of business)
- b. Is the information current? (Out of date information is dangerous and off-putting)
- c. Is it easy to navigate (i.e. easy to find relevant information)? (Essential)
- d. Do you own the content? (Check copyright and/or check with your Developer)
- e. Can you change the content? (Do you know the host and username and password)
- f. Does it provide links to other accommodation providers? (Hopefully not – but check)
- g. Do you monitor its performance? (Essential)

3. Marketing:

- a. Do you select your marketing activities based on historical performance data?
- b. Are you getting good value for your marketing/advertising expenditure?
- c. Do you market to your previous guests?
- d. Are details on Wholesaler and Accommodation directories current and accurate?
- e. Do you use Wholesalers effectively?

4. Email:

- a. Are you receiving all of your emails? (SPAM filters can be removing important messages)
- b. Do you respond immediately? (Essential)
- c. Do you advertise your corporate email address? (Important not to use your ISP address)
- d. Is your "Sender" address correct? (The Sender's name and also the embedded email address)

5. On-line booking systems:

- a. Do you display mixed messages? (Some systems display "usual" tariffs that are higher than your normal advertised rates)
- b. Do you co-ordinate your systems to avoid loss of business? (Vacancy details may not be accurate)

QRAMA Website Update

The QRAMA members' information library, a constant source of vital information for resident managers, has recently had a number of items added that will be of interest.

Left Property

We suggest that members have a procedure for handling property that has been left by guests. The Residential Tenancies Act does provide some requirements for property left by tenants but there is no legislation specifically directed at addressing the issue in relation to holiday guests.

The suggested procedure sets out steps that should be included in your policy for handling such matters. It can be found in the information library under Miscellaneous Guidelines.

The rule of thumb is to have a consistent policy and keep it simple. Document your policy so that it is available when needed by staff and guests.

Property Listing & Inspections

This topic regularly causes problems for resident managers. The Office of Fair Trading will review the topic in the next review of the Code of Conduct for resident letting agents and real estate agents but any action from that review will be some time away.

The basic issue is real estate agents who approach the resident manager to inspect units, supposedly on instructions

from the owner, and does not produce an appointment to sell the property (PAMDA Form 22a) nor does the agent have an appointment to let the property (PAMDA Form 20a).

The article provided by Mahoney Lawyers Partner Alan McKernan is available in the information library under Miscellaneous Guidelines.

Employment Noticeboard

An employment noticeboard is a recent addition to the QRAMA homepage. The noticeboard has vacancies from members looking for staff and from people with industry experience looking for a position.

The noticeboard now features a number of positions vacant up and down the east coast as well as a couple seeking a position as employees in the industry.

This noticeboard is provided as an additional service to members and should come in handy for those seeking staff to fill vacancies or if you are looking for employment in the industry.

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