

ON REGULATION OF BUILDING STANDARDS, BUILDING QUALITY AND BUILDING DISPUTES

I refer you to the correspondence on strata plan 10775 in Glebe, later below and to previous submissions attached which relate to the term of reference of your inquiry into regulation of building standards, building quality and building disputes:

(c) the role of strata committees in responding to building defects discovered in common property, including the protections offered for all strata owners in disputes.

One also refers to the **adequacy of consumer protections** by showing later below that if the building owners are recognized seriously as consumers, **the role and training of the strata manager and related agents appear wilfully ignored and dangerously misunderstood.**

In regard to (f) **Any other related matters** one points to **key service requirements and risks in any industry which seeks government support for group housing management and construction.**

Australians need more effectively open and reliable service design in the management of buildings and construction, or face increasing instability and cost as international underwriting cycles turn upward and then crash to the detriment of those unable to get out of the market early or wait out the crisis. Press reports suggest the global economy is on an edge like 2008. Lawyers always counsel secrecy as the control of words is their job when numbers let them down. In all financial matters, like divorce, the closed adversarial system is expensive, stupid, fuel for further dispute. Peoples' matters should be open enough for them to be questioned to be treated better.

I will be making a related submission to the Joint **Select Committee on Australia's family law system** later. I know family resentments and fights over money are often overlooked by women today. All have won the right and duty to try to get into paid work to support their offspring if they don't like how some man or other is spending their money. If he is bashing them as well, today they can more easily get out and try to find housing apart. This is because there is far more government support for them today than there was in 1975, although it is probably much harder to get a job. Being a single mother is common today. I chose to live the collective route in a single Glebe household from 1975 to 1995, before I went strata. Today most women may pretend to be self-supporting, whether they are or not.

I have never experienced family or any other violence, but I saw a lot of bitter family fights over money when I was growing up, until my mother eventually gave in, having no option. I was later involved as a supporter of the women's refuge movement, trying to find suitable housing in Glebe and Redfern, for women too frightened to go home. I also wrote a report with Heather Saville on

domestic violence. This was based mainly on talking to women and children living in refuges to inquire into their experiences and needs. We did this for the **Royal Commission into Human Relationships**, employed on a grant Frances Lovejoy got at UNSW from the Prime Minister's Department International Women's Year Secretariat in 1975. In 1982 I contributed substantially to the book published by Longman Cheshire, entitled **Family Violence in Australia**, which Jan Craney and I edited.

Women expect more today. This is basically a plea for more financial literacy, so people don't treat you like a child. There is no better place to start more effective financial literacy than in strata management. This is discussed later in regard to strata plan 10775 in Glebe. See related Bush Heritage discussion attached which addresses the effective stewardship of land, rather than housing.

I will naturally address the family law system inquiry terms of reference later, in regard to term of reference (ii) *any mechanism to improve the delivery of family law support services and family dispute resolution processes*. Having the capacity to house oneself and one's family in a manner she considers decent is probably still a woman's central aim in life, along with children, either before or after a man. Kids, the disabled and old are more vulnerable. Since 1907 they have also been expected to be looked after by women dependent on men. This era is over and housing is a central community service that I discuss later in strata.

The **Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability** should know these problems too, as people usually become more disabled and expensive for government as they age and die. The mental health of people is also deeply related to concerns where they live in most cases. Health professionals, however, can usually only treat apparent sufferers with drugs as if their problems result from a chemical imbalance within their bodies. This is a really big mistake which arises from viewing the world in market and industry-based party and professional terms rather than as regional service to Australian populations from the cradle to the grave. Democratic government expects the latter and has developed increasingly to support wider population interests.

See below, attached and at www.Carolodonnell.com.au for further information.

Cheers

Carol O'Donnell, St James Court, 10/11 Rosebank St., Glebe, Sydney 2037

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Hi Jordan

SAFETY, MONEY, TIME, WRONG AUTHORITARIAN TREATMENT AND PROMASTER

Do you feel what I feel? Can we make it so that's part of the deal? (Rod Stewart)

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WHAT FRESH HELL IS THIS? (STRATA LIVING WITH PROMASTER AND MATES)

Regarding your statement that Promaster have proposed to carry out a six-monthly common area inspection on Thursday 24th October 2019. This is wrong.

This interfering Promaster visit is against our will as was first pointed out with difficulty in the AGM minutes of the AGM held 30.10.18. (See previous correspondence on this later). **We have a ten-year capital works plan, yet are expected to let Promaster come and visit us every six months? Surely you jest!** What about all the other interests which may play ring-a-rosy together around this place, with costs of their own? I'm thinking here of *Strata Management Fees; Capital Works Fund Contributions; Maintenance and Repair Costs; Building Management; Accounting; Compliance; Disbursements; Insurances; Cleaning; Lawns and Gardening; and Utilities like electricity and water, etc.* **We have a 10-year capital works plan and I don't want to see Promaster again for ten years! Capiche?**

Promaster are causing us **untold cost and unsightly additions** to our building **against our will and against reason.** We have **a garage totally open to the road with egress on two of its other three sides. Nobody is at risk of dying here.** I will go into the alarming and ongoing cost of Promaster interference in our strata affairs against our collective will later, when I address some of the budget costs to strata plan 10775 so far.

You state: 'Can you confirm whether you wish to proceed as several issues were raised during the annual fire inspection. Six Monthly inspection forms a part of maintenance contract in place'. (Promaster are like an expensive running sore and I don't wish to see their representatives again for 9 years, let alone every six months. When one considers problems that they will keep on finding, they will always be here.

As we know on the strata committee of 18 townhouses at St James Court, time means money for people like Promaster. However, strata committee and others appear **forced by government fiat to do Promaster bidding, working for free, no matter what the disruption and cost to our normal lives whenever they interfere in our affairs.** Since I retired in 2007 and became a scholar householder and tourist, I have more truly come to see that they don't call it real estate for nothing. They serve wrong interests because they serve their more powerful market brethren before Australians and owners. Governments make unhealthy rods for their own backs, bowing to their forces.

I will deal later with the Promaster and Government capacity for driving many more stupid and wrong costs in the service of Macquarie Bank billionaire fund managers and insurance companies. I first address **unnecessary, unpaid time and trouble** to the **occupant owners; unknown renters; absentee owners; strata manager and many unknown real estate agents** of the 18 townhouses that comprise St James Court.

Every time Promaster blithely decide they would like to do an inspection on a particular date, it is a nightmare for all the above groups, depending on what is being inspected.

Getting inside garages and houses requires untold horrors because it involves agreement, keys and entry arrangements okayed by all the above groups.

If a building manager does not live on the premises, they appear to be a totally useless extra cost to our property owners in an environment which appears chronically badly managed by real estate agents and everybody else. We met building managers and shuddered at the extra trouble and expense generated by having an extra set of off-piste interests inserted into the crew already living freely off our personal time and money. They love their stupid set-ups or why would they have had them for so long? Jobs?

Something Promaster thinks is simple, like a 6 monthly visit they set, is actually a nightmare of organizational involvement for owners, a strata committee, a strata manager, many other real estate agents, and renters. Nobody wants to know! People don't want to hand over the keys to their garages, gates and dwellings so lightly, so authorised others may enter with or without their presence. Return visits cost too.

There are always later disputes about who is going to pay for any follow up work which is necessary because egress wasn't available to Promaster on the specified day and there are also extra costs if the right stuff isn't in houses. **Who pays them? The appropriate administrative procedures often seem a mystery to all involved. I have no idea. See the related discussion of this in appendices later and attached.**

TRYING TO TRACK MONEY PROMASTER HAS COST THE STRATA PLAN SO FAR:

RESISTING ANY FURTHER COSTS AS TOTALLY UNREASONABLE WITHIN 9 YEARS

Accounts from our last strata manager, Verdun Walsh, indicate costs billed to the strata plan by **Promaster** from **Jan.-May 2018** totalled **\$24,566.00**. This is the **biggest unexpected expense** I can recall since plumbers swooped on our strata plan, shortly before we had planned to repair the timber and paint the building. They claimed they had found asbestos in a garden and would search all 18 townhouse gardens, back and front, for more, shortly before the time of the global financial crisis in 2008 when I was living off my super fund which was also losing money. I felt intimidated resisting this. Here we go again – the troops gear up for the next recession – bugger the rest?

The second highest cost to Promaster that we had in 2018 was insurance premiums at \$15,000. The Hayne Royal Commission pointed out insurance is poor value for money when attached to superannuation and recommended its abolition in many cases. In strata, I guess the increasing costs of poor insurance design will continue and rise sharply in the light of the normal progress of international underwriting cycles. In manufacturing and associated research, the real aim is often the trailing maintenance costs and related commissions. Promaster seems to be leading the pack in costs which appear rarely designed in ways to serve the end users and payers.

Whelan's Property Group, our current strata manager, indicates costs to us generated by **Promaster** between 27.5.19 and 20.8.19 were **\$1384.53**.

I expect there are other costs somewhere in records I have missed, to say nothing of the time, trouble and cost caused to many when Promaster turn up wanting entry to garages or town houses. **I don't want to see Promaster again inside 9 years.**

Promaster has caused greater time and trouble for this strata committee so far than almost anything else related to our Administrative Account. On the other hand, the **10 Year Capital Works program, where wall replacement work was first proposed to us as urgent by NSW Government** has stalled for years through no fault of our owners. We have been waiting to go ahead with NSW government proposals for many years. They never had the courtesy to reply to our agreement to their work deemed urgent.

Other proposed administrative and related capital works also include what we owners actually think would be the most important safety and related work on these buildings. This work relates to securing common building foundations by creating appropriately safe and strong foundations, walls, fences and tree cover with our surrounding neighbours on all sides. (On the other hand, we have had child safety locks on windows, and fences pulled down, as wrongly directed safety measures for years. Now we have huge Promaster expenses and trouble forced down strata owners' necks suddenly and inappropriately, in comparative safety terms, as I guess many others would argue.)

Is there any comparative data on strata manager performance and costs?

We were told at the City of Sydney free training program, **Strata Skills 101: Strata Levies – Key Messages**, that as owners we have some control over how and when our administrative and capital works funds are spent. It has never seemed like that to me. I discuss the expected build-up of a Capital Works Funds 10 Year Plan which we began years ago, and the likelihood of this being increasingly poorly managed later to the detriment of property owners, renters, their supporting government coffers and small to medium businesses. I naturally can write only for myself on the strata committee.

It has always seemed there was a strata manager running things behind my back, carelessly dishing out potential work to tradesmen and their mates on the *old one-potato-two potato-three potato-four, etc. principle*. With Promaster and a potential global financial crisis looming, this looks set to me to get seriously out of hand in the DEFT Macquarie Bank accounting and insurance product areas, etc. etc. forced upon owners. It is all very well to discuss how levies are set. It is the interests of the strata manager that dictate how they set rates for themselves, I guess; and hence the rising levies. I pay **\$113 per week**, in levies.

I am alarmed by the driving potential for Promaster and others like them with related interests to dictate our lot as if they were from Nazi Germany, whatever it says on the Strata Skills package. Why is there an apparent lack of any press interest about rising strata on-costs other than in utilities? One assumes both sides of parliament are based on and held hostage to construction. I am sick of this nasty, lying, stupid lot that keeps talking about productivity and jobs as if they couldn't see their hands in front of their faces. The obscene payments to those at the top start with the Macquarie Bank and its DEFT financial product which strata managers now appear to be using in new ways addressed later.

Why not address outrageous costs of poorly designed management and insurances? The latter are indicated as our top expenditure for the next reporting period according to the **Statement of Key Financial Information** provided by Verdun and Walsh, for the reporting period **1.10.2017 to 30.9.2018**. I'm guessing that pretty soon our strata management costs will be right up there with insurance while old women on the strata, who actually own their own homes outright, do more for free.

Insurance premiums cost \$15,000. The next highest expense was fine: Building Maintenance and General Repairs \$12,000. (Verdun Walsh usually provided clear, helpful accounts, discussed later. I never doubted the scrupulous honesty of Deanne of Verdun Walsh. However, if the strata manager and presenter at **Strata Skills 101** thinks insurance is going to be **9%** of overall expenditure in future strata pie charts, she seems sadly mistaken on current trends at our place.

I guess there is no reliable comparative information, in strata management costs or any other area of quality management of housing, as usual? I guess it's just the usual 'Keep your mouth shut' and none of the brothers will stab you in the back?

One wonder why anyone thinks there should be a **building manager** as well as a **strata manager**? Note well, the latter is now being called **an agent**. An agent of owners? Baby, you'd better believe it? See below and attached for correspondence I have recently had on associated land, property and management matters.

Cheers Carol O'Donnell, St James Court, 10/11 Rosebank St., Glebe, Sydney 2037
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RESPONSE TO THE PROPERTY INDUSTRY REFORMS EXPLANATORY PAPER ON TRAINING

I respond to the **Property Industry Reforms Explanatory Paper** to point out that as a Glebe resident I have no idea whether the proposed reforms will meet their aims. You give no indication of what the **content** of the training is, which is supposed to result in a **strata** or other form of **licence**.

I am a resident owner of strata property and I want to point out **the accounting for administrative expenditure on strata**, let alone capital works, appear to have become comparatively appalling in the past year, starting with the central ability to produce clear accounts for those people paying the ongoing levies to live on the spot. (What do you people think we are, chopped liver?) This will be a problem for government and other stakeholders too.

I can't even understand the basic administrative accounting details presented to us by our new strata manager. Is this the result of changes to the strata manager's relationship with the Macquarie Bank DEFT financial product? I've got no idea but I know we all need to understand our accounts or we are in big trouble, including any lesser mortals in small and medium enterprises that won't get paid in a timely fashion as the next global financial crisis turns up.

This performance is not good enough for obvious reasons discussed below and attached. You could learn a lot from Bush Heritage operations addressed attached.

THE ROLE OF STRATA MANAGERS AND PROPERTY INDUSTRY REFORM

Thanks for the encouragement. I also write to you, the City of Sydney, the Owners Corporation Network and others about the role of strata managers, the content of their training and their certification. **I raise it with you now as a result of state govt. asking for feedback on property industry reform matters related to training and certification of strata managers (agents?) and linked land and property agents.**

If anybody needs good and clear **content** in training leading to certification in this country it is strata managers, starting with **financial operations** from the view of the owners rather than the strata managers or their best industry mates.

The place is historically run as if we all want secrecy most, so we can sell the townhouse at the top of the market before the crash and make money, whatever its state. As I am sure many will attest, we owners don't buy and sell houses like that, although a few might. We buy our houses to live in them as we go through the rituals of life or watch them break up, perhaps in an increasingly driving and romantic market, also driven by greater financial equality of the sexes, with mass public support. This keeps market costs unpredictably up and down to screw us. People who close their eyes to this reality appear doomed to be fleeced and exploited as the market ramps up their romantic dream and they grow older, more conveniently blind or embittered and more dependent on their wives and fellows than in the past with closer mates.

Surely all financial literacy and management comes down to the clear and appropriate structure and keeping of accounts and the keeping of accounts in strata now appears awful, I assure you, compared with what we used to have under Verdun Walsh.

This unclear accounting means the big end of town rules the roost and the big end of town is Macquarie Bank aided by the strata manager with DEFT and their bigger mates, like insurers and engineers or plumbers and electricians, etc. etc. who are obviously crucial in many ways. This is a secret recipe for owners to increasingly roll over under lawyers.

If accounts are not clear and meaningfully related to work projects undertaken and paid in a timely manner, they become increasingly unopen to challenge by anyone. (We used to have good accounts in our strata before new changes.)

Note that Nicholas Moore, former Macquarie Bank CEO was paid **\$23.86 million** last year and that this was the highest pay in the country behind Alan Joyce, CEO of Qantas at **\$23.88 million** (SMH 17.9.19 p.12). (This system is geared up to be fabulously unfair.)

The end payers are the bunnies, whether they are: owners, renters and residents in property, like us; or Council, state government and federal government; which we pay for

collectively as taxpayers or buyers in this country. This will happen as the building (s?) industry secretly or suddenly dishes out more uncontrollable increased maintenance and capital works costs carried out anytime those who are bigger or more unscrupulous in the industry want. This is scary in the wake of 2008 and everybody growing older and more expensive for governments through living longer in more single and/or disabled states.

I pay \$114 per week for strata living, in quarterly levies of \$1364. This is on top of a mortgage (which I don't have). However, it is typical of the power of this industry over government that rising, comparatively uncontrollable cost of levies is ignored in the press.

If government does nothing to fix up the appalling situation outlined below, they are crazy. The City of Sydney Council free course **Strata Skills 101: Strata Levies: Planning essential for strata** is good so far. I look forward to seeing what else it covers.

The **Owners Corporation Network** will only let me pay \$55 to join if I agree to be bound by the rules of the company in force at any time. (God knows what the rules are, but they must think I'm crazy. Why would I ever be bound by somebody else's rules? I would surely be a knave or a fool to do so for what they are offering – (mainly a chance to chat online with lots of others in a mess?) Perhaps I can do that better myself for free, thanks to the more democratic and intelligent way our political offices and websites have been constructed to be used. I wish I could say the same about the private and voluntary sectors.

Cheers Carol

COMPARISON OF VERDUN WALSH AND WHELAN'S PROPERTY GROUP ACCOUNTING PRACTICES: THE FORMER ARE PREFERRED FOR STRATA PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND COST CONTROL PURPOSES

This is a consideration of the draft minutes and financials for the 10775 strata plan meeting 26.8. 2019, undertaken in historical and comparative terms. This is necessary for quality management of the place and persons in it.

I only had time to look at the Whelan accounts shortly before the meeting and decided I had a lot of questions, so would look at them properly later.

One seeks to address Strata Plan 10775 Balance Sheet and related accounts on historical, comparative grounds. This is automatic personal and scientific medical practice when faced with the person to be treated somehow. It is also the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO view of life in theory, including in Oz.

One assumes that for quality management, the need for capital works is addressed as a result of experiences in the administrative fund, in many cases, and that strata levies and agent's fees must be in a position to **manage** both funds effectively.

These questioning comments and related advice are given to you and Whelan's Property Group in the light of the **minutes of the meeting (26.8.2019)** below:

2. Financials accepted.

It was noted that the Administrative Fund is in deficit.

It was suggested that the project of the walls be amalgamated under one account code.

I couldn't understand the Administrative Fund when I read it and I still don't know how it is in deficit. (I didn't raise this and voted with the rest, which happens a lot.)

Question (1). If it can't be put more clearly as a matter of course, **I would like to know how to read the *Administrative Fund in the Whelan's Property group Balance Sheet Detailed As at 26.8.19.***

I guess we would be better off without a lot of administrative detail discussed later which seems unclear, unnecessary and confusing.

Would less detail cost less? Are our agent's costs rising rapidly in an uncontrolled manner, compared with Verdun Walsh? It seems likely to me.

We appear to have somewhat lost our former growth in quality financial management direction in our balance sheet and accounts when we changed our **strata managers** (now called simply **agents**), from Verdun Walsh to Whelan's Property Group in March 2019. Since we changed, however, we have built up our funds to **\$132,093** in **26.8.19** compared with **\$112,259** in 30.9.2018. All capital work is still stalled?

Whelan's Property Group (**26.8.2019**) accounts fall behind Verdun Walsh (**30.9.2018**) for quality management purposes. The key dates above are the first indication of this. Whelan's appears managed so that regular quarterly or other comparisons with its own strata practice or with the strata practice of others is made more difficult by the comparatively random treatment of time and the environment surrounding the business. One assumes this may in time affect the timeliness of payments to smaller contractors to the business, as distinct from to bigger players.

We are all persons living in places, so consistent forms of understanding help communication which is also necessary for effective rather than disastrous or reasonably ordinary advance. Whelan's **Detailed Expenses for the financial year from 1.11.18 to 26.8.2019 provide too much pointless detail.** Payment of creditor; photocopying; postage; issue work order and trades compliance tell nothing useful about this lot. **Is this in addition to the Standard Management Fees?**

I cannot understand how the agent's fees in these Detailed Expenses relate to anything else. They both appear in comparatively meaningless and inconsistent statements all over the place. I can't understand the extent to which they are rising rapidly after a big hike above the Verdun Walsh rate in 2019, for example.

There is always a danger that the more we proceed the less we know and this appears to be getting worse instead of better in terms of any expected financial program and project management. This is frustrating as Verdun Walsh accounting in 2018 allowed one to follow up work done in particular project areas more easily.

I noted in the meeting minutes for item 4 (26.8.19):

4. We would like a request made to Landlay to provide the committee with a timetable i.e. Key milestones, expected completion dates etc. We are wanting to be advised that it may be possible to fast track the wall at No 18 should there be no need for drilling there.

I hope the clumsy phrase '**we are wanting to be advised**' doesn't mean we are about to insert yet more lawyers between all the many other decision layers that ought to be worked out openly by grown, expert and interested adults left to their own devices. Lawyers, like typists, have point if one writes clearly for others. Richard has done so in regard to the NBN, for example. We are not supposed to be adversaries, we are trying to do the right thing in the open as it is cheaper and better.

I have always thought that the best thing about Verdun Walsh was the quality of their accounts for the purposes of general understanding and follow-up of performance on this place. I could do this with plumbing, for example, to understand and reduce the number of emergencies, when **Rivergum** were servicing St James Court in an uncontrollable way, and people had lots of problems with shit in their laundries.

One notes we used to have a **strata manager** and now we have an **agent** instead. I fear that in the absence of better central management of finances and work we are likely to be driven increasingly by the Macquarie DEFT agenda with another global recession possibly coming up, as we already have the inverted yield curve as notice.

On the other hand, I know and trust the work of Rowan, Matt of Everready Plumbing, John and Robertson's Painting and Decorating, as we know what they have done with us for years. Plot based familiarity enhances mutual trust and understanding.

I would like to change away from **Sydney Roof and Gutter**, on the other hand because quality management is impossible with them and with others in continuing relationships like them, where we never know who will come out next. The more agents and workers are working on this building, in terms of any particular time and place, the more quality management is made harder and unwanted administrative costs are increased. (Promaster appears the latest government sponsored and unclearly ongoing expense.) Our last service with new gutter clean people was great.

Surely many of these management and quality management practices should have been worked out in the industry long ago, as a matter of course? I speak as a mere beginner in this industry-based reality which appears to avoid good management. What in God's name are the rest of them doing? I get the impression this industry is full of people working to rule to shift costs and perhaps invest our money on their own behalf, instead of cooperating effectively with each other to solve our problems.

(I was speaking to Matt about this yesterday as a result of our plumbing experiences with neighbours with shared internal walls, pipes and wires, but won't go into it here.)

Who pays debt collection fees? Surely the strata should not pay debt collection fees for individuals, especially in any environment where the Macquarie DEFT product is involved. Those on top are really big people who couldn't give a shit about us at the end of the line. I guess it will show up increasingly in the way they do their accounting. What makes business sense to them internationally may screw us here, with any coming recession. In an environment where we are supposedly involved in management according to much bigger boys' financial rules, I am worried. In my view, NAB and I manage my money clearly and others should follow.

I know it is early days in the change of agents but what do others think?

Cheers Carol

Hi Chris and Jon etc.

This is mainly to you both as I am personally resisting Promaster ever coming into my house again with the relevant documentation in item 17 ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY STATEMENT in the minutes of the AGM held 30.10.2018, which all may want to use or not, as the case may be.

Item 17 ANNUAL FIRE SAFETY STATEMENT resolved that the Owners Corporation **NOT (sic.)**

a. to engage a competent person to inspect the fire safety measures in Strata Plan 10775 and authorize that person to sign the Annual Fire Safety Statement on behalf of Strata Plan 10775.

b. authorizes the Strata Managing Agent to submit the completed Annual Fire Safety Statement to the Council and the Fire Commissioner.

My view is that I own my own home outright without mortgage and I'm sick of being treated like part of a high rise building under legislation in which the construction industry appears determined to shove comparatively stupid, time wasting, expensive practices down my gob while trying to frustrate the kind of way I want to live.

As far as I'm concerned, I am a person who wanted to live in my own terrace house in 1995 and against the odds I am trying to do so without a lot of men pushing me

around and using the strata manager acting like the Tar Baby to do it. I spent from 1975-1995 with a lot of men who were very helpful around the house instead. They also worked and spoke for free. (I never asked them to write for me.) No inspector ever came to our door and harassed us. Even the cops stayed away.

In short, I regard this government standard as offensively expensive overkill mainly designed to make work for the construction industry.

Carol

Hi Konrad (Jon also re Promaster)

RE: MY NEW WATER HEATER WHICH HAS REPLACED THE SOLAR HEAT PUMP ONE I USED TO HAVE AND RELATED FIRE (PROMASTER) CONCERNS

Thanks very much for that. I think your family business practices are exceptionally good from quality management perspectives, including clear and timely service every time, although I have no idea about your comparative cost of service. I guess it's higher than normal, like the quality of your service as I have experienced it. I always wonder if there is comparative industry data on this. I feel the same about how long water heaters are supposed to last before they rust and flood the lounge room carpet.

Would you be interested in looking at our strata garage and offering a quote for LED lights and related work at some time convenient to you and the strata? I assume you wouldn't charge for the quote, which has been the norm for tradesmen so far in our experience of strata practice.

I don't know what institutional affiliations your family is part of, if any, but I attach the policy position I am pushing in an even-handed manner towards the next election as a result of mainly understanding a bit about service provision in health care, as distinct from housing. (I've never worked in the private sector, mainly in govt. and academia instead.)

Feel free to bin the lot of service design lobbying attached if boring. I promise not to ask you questions about it later. Cheers and thanks a lot for your collective work when my poor old solar hot water heater went down at last after 13 years of service which always cut my electricity bill by one third compared with all electric before. We didn't have a fire anywhere when it rusted through to the motor because of the automatic electric switch-off you had previously put in my kitchen.

I will try to find out what in God's name **Promaster** are trying to do next. They have been going through our money like water on their own fire safety designs worked out with govt. **Now they want to come and check our fire alarms again when they only put and checked them in all of our 18 our homes in the first quarter of 2018. Who exactly should be paying for this?? I certainly don't want to pay it again here and I don't want them returning multiple times before they find someone home or not as the case may be. It drives us nuts when they want to get into 18 homes and 18 garages on a regular basis on their terms. It costs bigtime in our labour and cost, unpaid and paid.**

Your family practices are often a comparative breath of fresh air to me so I always wonder about the comparative cost. **I will write about this to our strata committee later because we don't charge each other for sending messages to each other and equally we don't care if we don't read them. With the strata managers and others in your industry we never know where we stand in writing although I assume their speech to anyone who phones is included free in their service to us on strata.**

Cheers, Carol

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