

Media Release

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Enough is enough – act now or lives will be lost!

“Stop passing the buck on combustible cladding rectification or lives will be lost.”

That’s the stark message from the Strata Community Association Queensland (SCAQ) to the state government as it continues to stall on providing the support and services needed for removal of combustible cladding from buildings across Queensland.

According to SCAQ general manager Laura Bos, roughly 800 buildings across Queensland remain impacted by the highly flammable material.

This is despite global action on bans and rectification that followed the UK’s deadly Grenfell Tower fire seven years ago, when it ignited an inferno that claimed 72 lives.

Ms Bos views the situation in Queensland as a potential ticking time bomb, especially given the evolution of amenities as electric vehicle charging systems, which have been earmarked as fire risks.

“We recently saw news reports of a unit explosion in New Farm that was caused by a charging electric scooter,” she said. “In this case the building was brick, but it’s only a matter of time before we face a similar issue in a building that features combustible material.

“If that happens, lives could well be lost.”

Ms Bos said the government – which had completed mitigation work on a range of public buildings – continued to hold the line that rectification of private buildings was an issue for private owners.

“What this position fails to acknowledge is that these people did nothing wrong,” she said. “They bought in good faith into buildings that had been approved by the state government.

“Those who can afford to fix the issue have done so, but those who can’t are drawn from the ranks of some of society’s most vulnerable members.

“Does the government really feel it’s OK to remedy the issue for some people, but not everyone?”

Ms Bos also pointed to the tangible impact the known risk of combustible cladding was having in driving up insurance premiums.

Noting that other states – including New South Wales and Victoria – had already taken action, she called for the Queensland Government to finally commit to full rectification.

SCAQ is advocating for a program modelled on the ACT’s Private Building Cladding Scheme, which offers low-interest-rate concessional loans for combustible cladding removal and replacement.

“We’re looking for a hand-up for people, not a handout,” Ms Bos said. “It’s about acknowledging that this is a critical safety issue and the government needs to take definitive action.”

Reflecting on the years the SCAQ had already spent actively pushing for change, she said the way ahead was simple.

“When you know there’s a situation, you fix it,” she said.

Ends.

Media inquiries:

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About Strata Community Association (Qld)

SCA (Qld) is the peak association supporting the state's strata sector, with more than 1,200 individual and corporate members who help oversee, advise, and manage hundreds of thousands of lots across Queensland. The association brings together people who manage strata schemes, own units or live in strata communities, and those who provide products and services for schemes. We also provide education, advice, and advocacy to enable better understanding of the regulations, obligations and owner's rights.