

Media Release | INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE

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Attention New South Wales Media

A NEW LOOK SCHOOLIES BRINGS SAME OLD CONCERNS TO STRATA

Northern New South Wales may be facing a “schoolies invasion” and unit, apartment and townhouse owners need to prepare – or be left with a potentially large clean-up bill.

And at the same time, the worldwide Airbnb “party house” ban will be put to the test.

Schoolies Week 2020 has been formally cancelled by the Queensland Government, because of coronavirus restrictions, leaving many northern NSW school leavers needing to rethink their plans this November.

The peak strata body in NSW has noted comments by Byron Bay Mayor Simon Richardson who confirmed schoolies in the northern NSW tourist town - emerging as the most viable schoolies option for Sydney students due to travel restrictions - would not be serviced with typical amenities this year.

As authorities confirm the end-of-year event will look quite different at hotspots in Northern New South Wales, young people and event planners are being warned that any large parties will be shut down under public health orders.

The peak strata industry body in New South Wales representing the interests of all strata industry stakeholders is warning strata managers to exercise vigilance when considering applications from school-leavers, and reminding young people that Airbnb has banned 'party' houses and parties will not be tolerated this year.

Strata Community Association (NSW) says despite the restrictions, overcrowding in apartments, noise complaints, damage to private and common property, drugs and underage drinking, and the health and safety of all are some of the concerns held by the industry in New South Wales.

Given schoolies are being allowed to rent accommodation for small groups of people with nowhere else to go; unlawful parties are more likely to occur, and

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damage to private and common property in apartment blocks could be significant.

SCA (NSW) President Chris Duggan says, "We are urging strata managers and on-site letting agents to carefully consider applications for accommodation from school-leavers to ensure issues like overcrowding and parties are avoided.

"Parents of schoolies should be very aware that they may now be held liable given this party house ban or for any damage caused to individual units and apartments or public spaces. The entertainment factor may be scaled right back because of COVID-19, but the bookings will still happen whether border restrictions are in place or not.

"Any schoolie flouting Public Health Orders or partying in an Airbnb booking could face stiff penalties and could face legal action for those who are caught. I'd urge strata managers and residents to speak up in any instance that overcrowding or unlawful parties occur in a strata-titled property," Mr Duggan said.

The right-of-passage party event, which sees thousands of high school graduates descend on Australia's coastal cities, has led to some costly consequences for owners of units, apartments and other strata-titled property in the past, and the requirement for the schoolies to keep within their accommodation only increases the likelihood of it occurring.

ENDS

About Strata Community Association

Strata Community Association (NSW) is the peak industry body for Strata and Community Title Management in New South Wales. Membership includes strata managers, support staff, committee members and suppliers of products and services to the industry. SCA (NSW) has in excess of 3,000 members who help oversee, advise or manage a combined property portfolio with an estimated replacement value of over \$400 Billion. SCA (NSW) proudly fulfils the dual roles of a professional institute and consumer advocate.

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