

Strata maintenance and repair laws across Australia: A comparative study

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About this document

This report has been written by Michael Teys for Michael Teys Strata Advisory as a supporting resource for a presentation, 'Beyond Band-aid Solutions', August 2025, made at the 2025 Strata Impact Conference, Gold Coast, Qld.

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Introduction

Across the world, the repair and maintenance of multi-owned properties has been neglected and underfunded. These buildings are ageing, becoming redundant, and presenting risks to the life, health and safety of owners and occupants, and the financial resources of their owners and financiers. The degradation of this housing stock is set to have a significant societal impact.

This report forms part of a presentation made by Michael Teys at Strata Impact Conference 2025 entitled 'Beyond Band-aid Solutions: addressing the systemic failures in progressive repairs and maintenance of collectively owned properties worldwide'.

The report outlines the results of a comparative study of maintenance and repair legislation across each of the Australian states and territories. Having created a framework of each provision relating to maintenance and repairs in each of the jurisdictions, a scorecard has been created allocating one point to each of the provisions which have been adopted.

This is a starting point for demonstrating the piecemeal approach that has evolved nationally concerning this very important issue. It does of course, not necessarily follow that every provision that has been adopted in some places is necessarily effective, however, the report does highlight obvious omissions in some states and territories that warrant attention.

This report is concerned only with residential apartment buildings. The report has compared the major pieces of legislation for this type of building in each state. Community land subdivisions have not been included. In Queensland, the report only considers the *Body Corporate and Community Management (Standard Module) Regulation 2020* (QLD). In South Australia, the report only considers the *Community Titles Act 1996* (SA).

Categories of maintenance provisions

This report considers provisions related to the maintenance and repair of common property in 10 categories. Each of these categories has over time been expanded. Across the eight states and territories of Australia, there are 47 key provisions which constitute the present regime for dealing with this issue in Australia.

The ten categories are as follows:

- 1. Strict liability this category is about the fundamental obligation to maintain and repair common property. It is a strict liability, and creates a statutory right for lot owners to sue a strata entity for breach of duty. It also exists in addition to common law rights, although only NSW recognises this expressly.
- 2. Maintenance funds this category relates to the obligation to treat funds for major maintenance and repairs separately to administrative funds. This obligation has been developed to include maintenance plans which are used for budgeting and scheduling work.
- 3. Home building warranties this category of legislation provides the framework for statutorily implied warranties that enable owners corporations to sue for defects.
- 4. Strata Information Certificates this category of provisions is relevant to maintenance in two respects. Firstly, the certificates provide basic information to purchasers about the inner workings of a strata entity. Secondly, the obligation to disclose certain information about maintenance and repairs in some jurisdictions, may operate as a form of market force to improve compliance, however, this hypothesis needs further research.
- 5. Termination and renewal there are provisions in three states and territories for termination and renewal which provide the ultimate solution for buildings that have fallen into disrepair, and are economically obsolete.
- 6. Design and construction oversight these provisions look at the involvement of government building and construction regulators in the design and construction process. This category of provisions has been the subject of extensive reform recently in NSW, and proscriptively in Victoria with laws that have been passed but do not become effective until 01 July 2026.

- 7. Post completion rectification orders this category of maintenance provisions enables government regulators to make rectification orders in newly completed buildings. Again, extensive reform in this area has occurred recently in NSW, and to a lesser extent in Victoria.
- 8. Annual Strata Hub reporting this initiative requires strata entities to file an annual report with the government regulator, including data about the balance of maintenance funds. To date, this initiative has only been taken in NSW.
- 9. Decennial Liability Insurance and bonds this category deals with a relatively new product providing a 10-year insurance policy for owners which is taken out by a developer as a precondition to undertaking construction. Where this product exists in NSW, it can be used as an alternative to defect bonds. Defect bonds are a payment of three percent of the construction value to secure performance of rectification of defects but only exist in NSW and Victoria.
- 10. Enforceable undertakings enforceable undertakings are a regulatory tool that enable government regulators to investigate, and require, rectification of work. These provisions, where they exist, extend beyond building defects, and enable regulators to intervene in the way a strata entity is performing its obligations to maintain and repair common property.

Findings

- 1. Seven out of the eight states and territories have less than 50 percent of maintenance and repair provisions applicable in their jurisdiction. This represents over 2.1 million apartments without the benefit of these laws. NSW is the out performer with a score of 44 out of 47.
- 2. Queensland is the outlier on the strict liability to maintain repair and replace. The duty there is merely to maintain, and there is an overriding obligation on bodies corporate to act reasonably.
- 3. Maintenance, repairs and replacements do not have to be performed according to the maintenance plan in all states and territories, save for NSW.
- 4. Strata Information Certificates do not include disclosure of outstanding building defects nor disclosure of unfunded repairs and maintenance anywhere in Australia.
- 5. Victoria has not followed NSW with an extensive regime of supervisory and interventionist regulatory powers during the design and construction phase. Victoria has adopted some of the interventionist provisions of NSW including pre completion inspection and surveillance visits during construction. All other states and territories are yet to legislate in this way.
- 6. Post construction rectification work, including rectification orders, stop work orders, and investigative and remedial powers, now exist in NSW and Victoria but not elsewhere.
- 7. Annual strata entity reporting has been introduced in NSW, including information about the balance of the maintenance fund. No data has yet been released. Western Australia has begun tracking the number of schemes managed by each strata manager but not details of the governance of the schemes.
- 8. Victoria and NSW now have defect bond schemes on new construction. However, only NSW has Decennial Liability Insurance. Decennial Liability Insurance will only be given in NSW where the developer and builder have an acceptable independent iCert rating.
- 9. Enforceable undertakings, including extensive investigative powers to require information and answers, issue search warrants, require the assistance of occupants and the strata entity, to seize and test materials, and issue compliance notices, exists only in NSW.

Overall summary ranking states and territories according to their aggregate scores

State / Territory	Strict liability	Maintenance funds	Home building warranties	Strata Information Certificates	Termination and renewal	Design and construction oversight	Post completion rectification orders	Annual Strata Hub reporting	Decennial Liability Insurance and bonds	Enforceable undertakings	Score
NSW	3/3	8/8	1/1	7/10	2/2	8/8	3/3	2/2	2/2	8/8	44/47
VIC	1/3	5/8	1/1	8/10	0/2	3/8	3/3	1/2	0/2	0/8	22/47
ACT	1/3	4/8	1/1	5/10	0/2	3/8	0/3	0/2	0/2	0/8	14/47
QLD	0/3	3/8	1/1	3/10	2/2	3/8	1/3	0/2	0/2	1/8	14/47
WA	1/3	5/8	1/1	2/10	0/2	1/8	0/3	0/2	0/2	2/8	12/47
SA	1/3	1/8	1/1	4/10	0/2	1/8	1/3	0/2	0/2	1/8	10/47
TAS	1/3	0/8	1/1	4/10	0/2	2/8	1/3	0/2	0/2	0/8	9/47
NT	1/3	0/8	1/1	1/10	2/2	1/8	0/3	0/2	0/2	0/8	6/47

Strict liability

State / Territory	Liability to maintain, repair and replace	Statutory right for lot owners to sue for breach of duty to maintain, repair and replace common property	Preservation of common law rights	Score
NSW ⁱ	✓	✓	✓	3/3
VIC"	✓	X	X	1/3
ACT ⁱⁱⁱ	✓	X	X	1/3
SAiv	✓	Х	Х	1/3
WA	✓	Х	Х	1/3
NT ^{vi}	✓	X	Х	1/3
TAS ^{vii}	✓	Х	Х	1/3
QLD	Х	Х	Х	0/3

Maintenance funds

State / Territory	Establish a separate maintenance fund	Budget annually for contributions to the maintenance fund	Prepare a long-term maintenance plan	Fund maintenance according to the maintenance plan	Perform maintenance according to the maintenance plan	Review the maintenance plan at each AGM	Periodically update the maintenance plan	Mandated form of plan	Score
NSW	√viii	√ix	√x	√ ^{xi}	√xii	√xiii	√xiv	✓	8/8
VIC	√xv	√xvi	√xvii	√xviii	Х	√xix	Х	Х	5/8
WA	√xx	√xxi	√xxii	Х	Х	√xxiii	√xxiv	Х	5/8
ACT	√xxv	√xxvi	√xxvii	Х	Х	Х	√xxviii	Х	4/8
QLD	√xxix	√xxx	√xxxi	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	3/8
SA	√xxxii	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	1/8
TAS	Х	Х	Х	X	Х	Х	Х	Х	0/8
NT	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	0/8

Home building warranties

Each state and territory has statutory building warranties.

State / Territory	Legislation	Score
NSW	Home Building Act 1989 (NSW) s 18B	1/1
VIC	Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995 (VIC) s 8	1/1
QLD	Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 (Qld) sch 1B pt 3	1/1
TAS	Residential Building Work Contracts and Dispute Resolution Act 2016 (TAS) Part 6	1/1
SA	Building Work Contractors Act 1995 (SA) s 32	1/1
ACT	Building Act 2004 (ACT) s 88	1/1
WA	Home Building Contracts Act 1991 (WA) s 11	1/1
NT	Building Act 1993 (NT) s 54B	1/1

Strata Information Certificates

State / Territory	Reports and records to be made available for inspection	Strata information certificate in prescribed / sample form	Disclosure of building defects outstanding required	Disclosure of unfunded repairs and maintenance required	Disclosure of special levies / fees required	Disclosure of other unfunded liabilities (eg strata loans) required	Disclosure of legal proceedings in place required	Disclosure of notices and orders outstanding required	Disclosure of other relevant information required	Statement about further information	Score
VIC	√xxxiii	√xxxiv	Х	√xxxv	√xxxvi	√xxxvii	√xxxviii	√xxxix	Х	√xl	8/10
NSW	√xli	√xlii	Х	√xliii	√xliv	√xlv	Х	√xlvi	√	Х	7/10
ACT	√xlvii	√xlviii	X	X	√xlix	√ı	√li	X	X	X	5/10
SA	√lii	Х	Х	√ liii	√liv	√lv	Х	Х	Х	Х	4/10
TAS	Х	Х	Х	Х	√lvi	√lvii	√lviii	Х	√lix	Х	4/10
QLD	√lx	√lxi	Х	Х	√lxii	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	3/10
WA	√lxiii	√lxiv	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	2/10
NT	√lxv	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	1/10

Termination and renewal

State / Territory	Reduced threshold to redevelop	Reduced threshold to make a collective sale	Score
NSW ^{lxvi}	✓	✓	2/2
NT ^{lxvii}	✓	✓	2/2
QLD ^{lxviii}	✓	✓	2/2
VIC	Х	Х	0/2
ACT	Х	X	0/2
TAS	Х	Х	0/2
SA	Х	X	0/2
WA	Х	Х	0/2

Design and construction oversight

State / Territory	Design compliance declaration	Registration of 'as executed' plans	Amended plans registered during construction	Pre- completion inspection	Surveillance visits during construction	Initial strata maintenance schedule by developer	Public or private certification on completion	Retrospective duty of care for economic loss and personal liability	Score
NSW	√lxix	√lxx	√lxxi	√lxxii	√lxxiii	√lxxiv	√lxxv	√lxxvi	8/8
VIC	Х	Х	Х	√lxxvii	√lxxviii	Х	√lxxix	Х	3/8
QLD	X	X	X	√lxxx	√lxxxi	X	√lxxxii	X	3/8
ACT	Х	Х	X	√lxxxiii	√lxxxiv	Х	√lxxxv	X	3/8
TAS	X	Х	X	√lxxxvi	X	X	√lxxxvii	X	2/8
ACT	Х	Х	X	√lxxxviii	√lxxxix	Х	√xc	X	3/8
SA	Х	Х	Х	Х	X	Х	√xci	Х	1/8
WA	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	√xcii	Х	1/8
NT	X	Х	X	X	X	Х	√xciii	X	1/8

Post completion rectification orders

State / Territory	Power to order rectification	Stop work / prohibition orders	Investigation and remedial powers	Score
NSW	√xciv	√xcv	√xcvi	3/3
VIC	√xcvii	√xcviii	√xcix	3/3
QLD	√c	Х	X	1/3
TAS	√ ^{ci}	X	X	1/3
SA	√ ^{cii}	Х	X	1/3
ACT	X	X	X	0/3
WA	X	Х	X	0/3
NT	X	X	Х	0/3

Annual Strata Hub reporting

State / Territory	Strata entity to file an annual report with the regulator	Annual report to include balance of maintenance plan	Score
NSWciii	✓	✓	2/2
VIC	X	X	0/2
QLD	X	Х	0/2
ACT	X	X	0/2
TAS	X	X	0/2
SA	X	X	0/2
WA	X	X	0/2
NT	X	X	0/2

Decennial Liability Insurance and bonds

State / Territory	Decennial Liability Insurance	Defect bonds	Score
NSW	√civ	√cv	2/2
VIC	Х	√cvi	1/2
QLD	Х	Х	0/2
TAS	X	Х	0/2
ACT	X	X	0/2
SA	X	Х	0/2
WA	X	Х	0/2
NT	Х	Х	0/2

Enforceable undertakings

State / Territory	Power to enter lots and common property	Power to require information and records	Power to require answers to written questions	Power to issue search warrants	Power to require assistance of occupants and strata entity	Power to seize things	Power to issue compliance notices	Power to seek and accept enforceable undertakings from parties, to do things	Score
NSW	√cvii	√cviii	√cix	√cx	√cxi	√cxii	√cxiii	√cxiv	8/8
WA	√cxv	√cxvi	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	2/8
QLD	√cxvii	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	1/8
SA	√cxviii	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	1/8
TAS	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	0/8
VIC	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	0/8
ACT	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	0/8
NT	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	0/8

Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 106.

Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) ss 46, 47.

Unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s2 4.

Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 75(1)(b).

Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 91.

vi Unit Titles Act 1905 (NT) s 34.
vii Strata Titles Act 1998 (TAS) s 81(1)(c).
viii Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 74.
ix Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 74(1), s81

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* Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 80.
xi Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 80(7).
xii Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 80(7).
Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 79(6)(b).
xiv Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 80(3).
vv Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 40.
xvi Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 42.
xvii Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 36(1).
xviii Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 42(3).
vix Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 39.
xx Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 100(2)(a).
xxi Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 100(2)(b).
xxii Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 100(2A)(a).
xxiii Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) ss 102(1), 102(2)(a).
xxiv Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 100(2A)(b).
xxv Unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s 81.
xxvi Unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s 75(1).
xxvii Unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s 82(2).
xxviii Unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s 85.
xxix Body Corporate and Community Management (Standard Module) Regulation 2020 (Qld) Reg 167.
Body Corporate and Community Management (Standard Module) Regulation 2020 (Qld) Reg 160(3)(b).
Body Corporate and Community Management (Standard Module) Regulation 2020 (Qld) Reg 160(3).
xxxii Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 116.
Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 146.
xxxiv Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 151; Owners Corporations Regulations 2018 (VIC) reg 16.
xxxv Owners Corporations Regulations 2018 (VIC) reg 16(e).
xxxvi Owners Corporations Regulations 2018 (VIC) reg 16(d).
Owners Corporations Regulations 2018 (VIC) reg 16(i).
xxxviii Owners Corporations Act 2006 (VIC) s 151(4)(a)(xi); Owners Corporations Regulations 2018 (VIC) reg 16(m).
xxxix Owners Corporations Regulations 2018 (VIC) reg 16(I).
xl Owners Corporation Act 2006 (VIC) s 151(4)
xli Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 182.
xlii Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 184(6).
Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 184(3)(g).
Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 184(3)(f).
xiv Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 184(3)(i); Section 184 Certificate, Item 20.
XIVI Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 184(3)(i), Section 184 Certificate, Item 11A.
unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s 120A.
xiviii Unit Titles (Management) Act 2011 (ACT) s 119(5); Unit Titles (Management) Sale Certificate Determination 2025.
xlix Unit Titles (Management) Sale Certificate Determination 2025 cl 4(5).
Unit Titles (Management) Sale Certificate Determination 2025 cl 4(7).
Unit Titles (Management) Sale Certificate Determination 2025 cl 4(11)(a).
Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 139(1)(c).
iii Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 139(1)(a).
liv Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 139(1)(a)(iii).
Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 139(1)(a)(ii).
Mi Strata Titles Act 1998 (TAS) s 83(5)(c).
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Vii Strata Titles Act 1998 (TAS) s 83(5)(d).
Viii Strata Titles Act 1998 (TAS) s 83(5)(f).
Iix Strata Titles Act 1998 (TAS) s 83(5)(g).

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<sup>™</sup> Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 (Qld) s 205(2)(a);
Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 (Qld) s 205AAA;
kii Body Corporate and Community Management (Standard Module) Regulation 2020 Reg 233AA(1)(d).
Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 109.
Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 110.
Unit Titles (Management Modules) Regulations 2009 (NT) sch 1, cl 48, 49.
Strata Schemes Development Act 2015 (NSW) s 154.
Termination of Units Plans and Unit Title Schemes Act 2014 (NT) s 4.
Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 (Qld) s 81K(4).
Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 (NSW) s 9.
bxx Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 (NSW) s 17.
Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 (NSW) s 20.
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) s 6.9.
kxiii Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021 (NSW) reg 61.
bxiv Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 115.
bxxv Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) s 6.10.
bxxvi Design and Building Practitioners Act 2020 (NSW) s 37.
bxvii Building Act 1993 (VIC) s 34.
bxxviii Building Act 1993 (VIC) s 34
lxxix Building Act 1993 (VIC) s 38.
bxx Building Act 1975 (Qld) s 102.
bxxxi Building Regulation 2021 (Qld) reg 44.
lxxxii Building Act 1975 (Qld) s 102.
bxxxiii Building Act 2004 (ACT) s 44.
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 (SA) s 146.
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 (SA) s 152.
building Act 2016 (TAS) s 149(1).
lxxxvii Building Act 2016 (TAS) ss 104, 153.
Building Act 2004 (ACT) s 44.
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 (SA) s 146.
xc Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 (SA) s 152.
xci Building Act 2004 (ACT) s 69.
xcii Building Act 2011 (WA) s 56.
xciii Building Act 1993 (NT) s 63.
xciv Residential and Apartment Buildings (Compliance and Enforcement Powers) Act 2020 (NSW) s 33.
xcv Residential and Apartment Buildings (Compliance and Enforcement Powers) Act 2020 (NSW) s 29.
xevi Residential and Apartment Buildings (Compliance and Enforcement Powers) Act 2020 (NSW) s 12.
xovii Building Legislation Amendment (Buyer Protections) Act 2025 (VIC) s 84 amending Building Act 1993 (VIC) s 75 effective 01 July 2026
xcviii Building Act 1993 (VIC) s 44(2) as amended effective 01 July 2026
xcix Building Legislation Amendment (Buyer Protections) Act 2025 (VIC) s 137ZZK effective 01 July 2026
<sup>c</sup> Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991 (Qld) s72
a Residential Building (Miscellaneous Consumer Protection Amendments) ACT 2022 (TAS), Building Act 2016 (TAS)
cii Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016 (SA)
ciii Strata Schemes Management Regulation 2016 (NSW) cl 43, 43A(1)(s).
civ Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) Part 10, Division 3AA.
ov Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 207; Strata Schemes Management Regulation 2016 (NSW) reg 54.
cvi Building Legislation Amendment (Buyer Protections) Act 2025 (VIC) effective 01 July 2026
cvii Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 211G.
cviii Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 211D.
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cix Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 211E.

cx Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 211H.

cxi Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 2111. cxi Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 211J(2)(e).

cxiii Strata Schemes Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 (NSW) sch 1, item [51], inserting Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 188X. cxiv Strata Schemes Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 (NSW) sch 1, item [51], inserting Strata Schemes Management Act 2015 (NSW) s 188T.

Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 95.

cxvii Strata Titles Act 1985 (WA) s 96.
cxviii Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 (Qld) s 163.
cxviii Community Titles Act 1996 (SA) s 101(2).