**Strata Professionalism Still the Key To Consumer Outcomes With Passing of New Unit Title Laws**

**Friday 6 May 2022:** With the passage of the *Unit Titles (Strengthening Body Corporate Governance and Other Matters) Bill 2022* through its third reading and on to Royal Assent, the strata industry’s peak professional body SCA is making calls for increased attention to strata manager and industry professionalism.

Strata Community Association New Zealand (SCA NZ) is the peak strata industry body in New Zealand, representing and advocating for the approximately 350 strata managers across New Zealand and the hundreds of thousands of people living in a strata titled property such as apartments or townhouses.

Strata managers operate in a complex environment, interacting with legislative and regulatory requirements and effectively managing money on behalf of clients.

SCA (NZ) President Joanne Barreto said SCA (NZ) has been heavily involved in the Bill since 2018, through its working group and has worked hard for its passage, and commended the work of Nicola Willis in particular, but stressed the critical importance of professionalism on good consumer outcomes & protection.

“Without a resourced, quality industry body, many of the good reforms included in this Bill will fall flat,” said Ms Barreto.

“Just as other more mature professions such as accounting and law have well-resourced and highly professional industry bodies delivering training and playing a part in regulation, the strata industry must be supported to make that journey too.

“The Code of Conduct included in the Bill is commendable, but SCA (NZ)’s Code for members is more rigorous and provides additional consumer protections.

**“**In Australia, SCA (NSW) has successfully taken steps to improve their professionalism by signing up to a Professional Standards Scheme administered by the independent statutory body the Professional Standards Council, and we need to consider formal self-regulatory approaches in New Zealand, in addition to SCA (NZ)’s member programs, to continue to raise the bar in a huge growth industry.

“Our members have access to training and certification programs that have been developed and tested in Australia and New Zealand

“Consumer knowledge that their strata managers are trained, certified, knowledgeable and there is industry or regulatory oversight is critical to any industry.

**ENDS**

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**About Strata Community Association**

SCA (NZ) is the peak professional association for the New Zealand Body Corporate and Community Title Management industry and was formed in 2016 to provide a forum for improved standards and education in the industry.

Membership includes body corporate managers, support staff, committee members and suppliers of products and services to the industry. SCA proudly fulfills the dual roles of a professional institute and consumer advocate.

Based on the 2020 Australasian Strata Insights Report, approximately 115,000 New Zealanders live in apartments and between 275,000 and 400,000 people living in properties under strata title of some kind (including townhouses, residential accommodation etc.). The industry employs approximately 352 full-time strata managers.

A key driver of SCA (NZ) is to improve the standard and professionalism of the body corporate management industry.