



### LIFELINE LAUNCHES LONELINESS SURVEY

Lifeline Australia today launched the on-line Lifeline Loneliness Survey, which seeks to understand people's feelings of loneliness in Australian society in the midst of our current national suicide emergency.

The six question survey will be available through the Lifeline website www.lifeline.org.au and on Lifeline's social media channels.

Lifeline Australia CEO Pete Shmigel said: "Isolation and loneliness can be very significant risk factors in suicide. Disconnection from family, friends and community can drive despair, particularly for those who may already be struggling – while connection is a key way to protect people from the risk of suicide.

"Indeed, thousands of Lifeline's callers report that they are lonely and some 55% report that they live alone, and many call us for a real conversation with a caring human being. Therefore, in the lead-up to the wonderful initiatives of R U OK? Day and World Suicide Prevention Day which encourage real conversations, we want to ask the general public the simple questions 'Do you feel lonely?' and 'Do you have people in your life that you can confide in?'

"It's been suggested that in a digital world - where according to R U OK? we physically spend an average of 46 hours of our weekly downtime looking at our TVs and digital devices- some of us can become even more lonely even though we may have hundreds of friends on social media. In part, we want to better understand whether digital relationships are positive substitutes for direct relationships with live humans," Mr Shmigel said.

Suicide rates in Australia have recently risen with ABS statistics showing a 10 year-plus high with 2864 deaths in 2014, an increase of 13.5 percent from the previous year. This represents some 8 suicides per day with middle aged men being the most susceptible age and gender group, while suicide in indigenous and rural Australia is considerably higher than the average rate.

In the lead up to its eighth R U OK? Day on Thursday 8 September, R U OK? is urging all Australians to spend more time catching up with friends, chatting on the phone with family, or visiting elderly relatives.

The Lifeline Loneliness Survey is completely anonymous and open until Friday 9th September. Lifeline are keen to share their findings with other mental health groups and the wider public to stimulate more discussion around the feelings of loneliness and isolation in Australia society – and how we can better address them.

For crisis or suicide prevention support, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or visit [www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp](http://www.lifeline.org.au/gethelp)



### THE POWER OF KINDNESS

This year has been one of considerable turbulence both in Australia, the world and especially the Middle East and Europe.

A time to reflect on the need to be kind to one another, to suspend judgement and find what we have in common with one another rather than what separates us.

Dr. Ferrucci, in his book The Power of Kindness, reveals that the kindest people are the most likely to thrive, to enable others to thrive, and to slowly but steadily turn our world away from violence, self-centeredness, and narcissism- and toward love. Writing with a rare combination of sensitivity and intellectual depth, Dr. Ferrucci shows that, ultimately, kindness is not a luxury in our world but rather a necessity for us all.

Awful things and people won't go away because we mock them, better to aim to deal with others with a tone that is generous, curious and civil. If we understand them, see where they are coming from, and treat their advocates and supporters as fellow human beings, we have much more chance of dealing with them successfully and therefore of making the world a better place.

Cheers

  
Gordon Russell

ps: Do you have any friends who need to read our newsletter? Ring and we will post one out or they can download it from our website ☐

### CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

Our best wishes for Christmas & the New Year, to you and those close to you.

This Christmas we are closing our office from 5pm Tuesday December 20th and opening on Thursday January 5th from 9am.

For accounts due Jan 1st or before, you have until Jan 10th to pay before penalties apply.

If you have an emergency over the break and you need assistance just ring 8333-5200 for up to date details on contractors and emergency services.



### emergency numbers

Plumbing , Gas, Roof Leaks	8356 2750
Electrical	1300 130 229
Breakins & Glazing	0411 848 398
Police to attend - noise/robbery etc.	131 444
State Emergency Service storm/flood	132 500



### DRONES USED TO INSPECT BUILDINGS PROMPT PEEPING TOM CONCERNS

Drones may help save a lot of money for unit owners in multi storey buildings. Choosing the right operator will be critical. The following was reported by Simon Johanson of The Age in late 2016.

Drones are increasingly being used by body corporates and insurance firms to inspect the outside of tall buildings, but their use has prompted peeping Tom concerns from apartment dwellers.

The peak body for strata title and body corporates, Strata Community Australia, said strict guidelines were needed for drones being used to inspect the outside of buildings. Drone operators are required to follow federal privacy regulations.

"We are aware of incidents where drones have been used purely for the purpose of spying on others and invading their privacy," SCA chief executive Kim Henshaw said.

Mr Henshaw said guidelines for drone use should be included in local government bylaws and followed by building managers and owners.

"We want managers to take action and notify all owners and residents about the presence of a drone being used for maintenance and inspections, including details regarding the time of use, and for what period," he said.

Aerial by Drone director Lorraine Scott, who last year started a national drone-focused business for building and insurance inspections, said privacy was a top priority.

Drone operators are required to follow federal privacy regulations around data storage, camera operation and limiting access to the information collected.

People living or working in an apartment were informed about when and how any inspection would take place, Ms Scott said.

"The last thing we want is to upset anyone. You can also hear the drones long before you see them. To date we have not had an issue with privacy," she said.

Ms Scott said her firm had seen strong uptake in requests for building and roof inspections because of the significant cost savings.



The technology overcame complex, hazardous and often costly hurdles associated with exterior building inspections like installing scaffolding, lifts or cherry pickers.

Drones could provide surface area 3D modelling, thermal images and on-send data immediately to third parties such as insurance companies to speed up claim turnaround times.

Mr Henshaw said about 26 per cent of Australia's population lived in apartments or units.

"Drones could mean big savings for strata communities nationwide when checking on things like window safety and structural integrity [of] storeys above the ground," he said.

Drone technology may have its biggest impact on infrastructure, a recent PwC report on the technology's commercial applications found.

"Real-time awareness and accuracy have always been challenges on construction sites ... it seems that drones are able to provide the data required at each phase of the construction process," PwC said.

"Monitoring and repair are not the only drone applications being developed within the infrastructure industry. Start-ups are testing drone technology to perform hazardous tasks at height, such as painting and window cleaning," it said.

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after hours emergencies - phone 8333 5200 for up to date information.



## BUILDING CRACKS - WHO PAYS?

When is a crack in a unit wall the owner's responsibility and when is it the Corporation's?

This has been a long running area of dispute here in Adelaide where we have such reactive soils.

In New South Wales a crack of 2mm and less is considered cosmetic and the owner's to make good.

There was a belief that the 'best' form of construction for domestic home was double brick and plaster. This has proved to be a problem over time with many homes suffering cracks in the plaster. A repaint along with an acrylic filler such as No More Gaps is usually sufficient to see the wall good for some years.

For an owner to make a case that their body corporate should make good the damage, they need to show that the corporation's foundations have failed beyond cosmetic movement.

Such movements in our experience are the result of leaking water or sewer pipes, nearby trees and insufficient watering of the grounds about the units.

The picture below shows cracks in the walls of a unit. The strip foundations have subsided following leakage from a storm water drain. The water has washed away the soil supporting the foundations.



One modern group of apartments in North Adelaide found the solution to building movement and cracking caused by drying soils was to install a deep soil watering system. This uses drippers and slotted pipework below the soil surface.

**Best practice:** If the cracks are 5mm or larger then have your Corporation engage its plumber to check for leaks in all pipework about the foundations.

For more information including CSIRO foundation maintenance tips go to..

[www.unitcare.com.au/bp\\_strata\\_maintenance\\_foundations\\_paths.html](http://www.unitcare.com.au/bp_strata_maintenance_foundations_paths.html)

Note. This advice only applies to Strata Titles groups and Community Titles with a strata division.

## LEAKING EXTERNAL TAP - WHO PAYS?

There is a common myth that circulates amongst unit owners and, property managers and sales agents. If it is outside the unit it is the body corporate's to fix.

When it comes to services such as water, sewer and electricity this is not the case.

Section 5 part 6 of the Strata Titles Act spells out other structures and services that are the Strata Corporation's responsibility to maintain.

Section 5: Boundaries

(6) The common property comprises:

(b) any pipe, cable, wire, duct or drain that is not for the exclusive use of a unit;

What does this mean?

Services that do not serve a single unit, are the Corporation's common property. This includes the common water supply, stormwater drainage and sewerage disposal.

For example where an external tap is for the exclusive use of an owner then they must maintain it. This includes taps that may be in an informal back yard that is fenced but part of the common property. Many older groups have such arrangements.

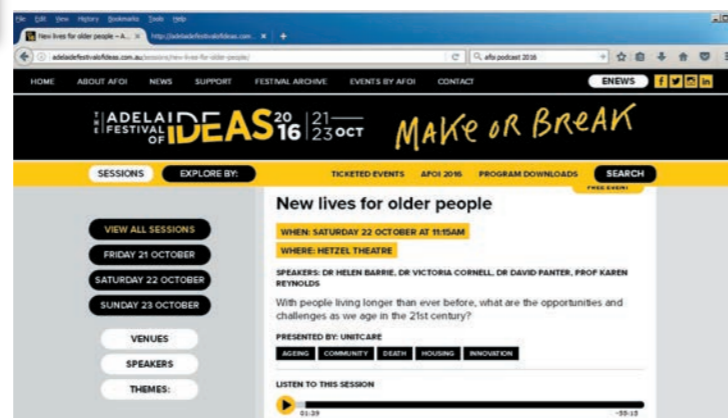
For more information go to ...

[www.unitcare.com.au/bp\\_strata\\_maintenance.html](http://www.unitcare.com.au/bp_strata_maintenance.html)

## ADELAIDE FESTIVAL OF IDEAS PODCASTS

Sessions and discussions at the recent Adelaide Festival of Ideas were recorded by Radio Adelaide and are now available online. The panel discussion New Lives for Older People was hosted by Unitcare Services. The podcast amongst the many others can be found at ....

[www.adelaidefestivalofideas.com.au/sessions/new-lives-for-older-people/](http://www.adelaidefestivalofideas.com.au/sessions/new-lives-for-older-people/)



## RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT LICENSING

We are heartened to see that the State Government has agreed to the licensing of Property Managers (rental agents). The following is a media release from the REISA.

*The Real Estate Institute of South Australia (REISA) is delighted at the announcement today from the State Government that residential property managers will need to be licensed in South Australia.*

*REISA CEO Greg Troughton said " We have lobbied the Government extremely hard for many years over the need for property managers to be licensed in this State. Property Managers manage vast portfolios of property worth many tens of millions of dollars and deal with complex issues between landlords and tenants every day. It is therefore essential that they are as relevant, professional and educated as possible. This not only improves the reputation and accountability of the profession but also serves as a fantastic foundation for consumer protection."*

*" South Australia is the only State in Australia that currently has no requirements for residential property management licensing and it is fantastic that we are finally recognising the enormous skills and expertise required to become an effective residential property manager."*

*" I would like to thank the Attorney-General, the Hon John Rau MP and the Acting Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Mr George Kamencak and his team for their commitment towards the licensing of property managers and I look forward to meeting with them over the coming months to finalise the details of this important initiative moving forward" Mr Troughton said.*

Greg Troughton CEO REISA



The following is a media release from the the SA Government.

### NEWS RELEASE



Deputy Premier John Rau MP  
Minister for Consumer and Business Services

Friday 11 November 2016

### Clock ticking on dodgy property managers

*The proposed introduction of a registration system for managers of residential property aims to weed out unprofessional or dodgy operators.*

*At present, commercial property managers must be registered as a land agent or sales representative under the Land Agents Act - but the requirement does not extend to the residential property sector.*

*The move responds to demand with the State's consumer watchdog, Consumer and Business Services, receiving about 180 calls a month from tenants, property managers and landlords relating to either inadequate service or alleged inappropriate or poor behaviour from a property manager.*

The full and original media releases can be found at [www.unitcare.com.au/case\\_studies.html](http://www.unitcare.com.au/case_studies.html)

# Consumer protection for landlords

TOM BOWDEN

LANDLORDS put a lot of faith in their property managers, trusting them to look after their significant investments and run them professionally. In a move that should give extra confidence to landlords, the State Government is introducing registration requirements for residential property managers.

"Property managers manage vast portfolios of property worth many tens of millions of dollars and deal with complex issues between landlords and tenants every day," Mr Troughton says. "It is therefore essential they are as relevant, professional and educated as possible." Mr Troughton says South Australia is the only state in Australia that currently has no requirements for residential property management licensing. "We have a fundamental belief that until you're required to do some form of training in order to do a job then you can never regard it as a profession," Mr Troughton says.

"Consumer protection, both for the tenant and landlord, is paramount and there should be some sort of education or training provided to become registered. "It is fantastic that we are finally recognising the enormous skills and expertise required to become an effective residential property manager." Mr Troughton says REISA will work with the government to create the training material and says demonstration of recognised learning would make the accreditation process faster for proven performers already working in the field. "There are probably three or four registered training organisations that would gear up for

the training," Mr Troughton says. Mr Troughton says discussions between REISA and the government will start early next year with the view to introduce the training requirements as soon as possible. "I imagine the course would take about a week to ten days, possibly quicker," Mr Troughton says. "My aim would be that from July 1 next year, and that date is just my recommendation, they will have 12 months to do the required training and then, come a year later, everybody would be required to have that training to become licensed. The longer we leave it, the longer the consumers are at risk."

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