

# RESPONSES TO ISSUES PAPER

## QUESTIONS

1. Ingoing payment and outgoing contribution are important factors.
2. Retirement villages need clear description as they are frequently described as aged care facilities.
3. The current purpose of the RV Act is still appropriate but greater accountability for owners need to be specified.
4. All villages need to be registered.
5. Dependent on this review.
6. The 21 days consideration period is sufficient. The cooling off period could be extended to 14 days.
7. Reference should be made to all fees incurred from the time of entry to leaving a village. Examples of costs need to be up front not camouflaged when salespersons are stressing the positives.
8. Yes, but this needs to be distributed at time of enquiry rather than seen as an 'add on' hand-out later. There is lack of consistency in providing this information.
9. There is need for salespersons to give accurate info re costs. The financial representative should be available to the prospective resident.
10. The timeframes for the fact sheet and disclosure information should be available at the same time as any other publicity distributed.
11. Cannot comment.
12. Contracts lack clarity because of the language used, particularly terms such as 'at their discretion'.
13. Where possible everyday language needs to be used. There is need for verification that the contract has been cited and explained to the resident by a lawyer. Where there are multiple contracts operative in a village, confusion arises when important issues arise e.g. refurbishment or change in length of stay for visitors. All residents need to be informed of change in writing. Posting of info on noticeboards is insufficient and nor seen by some residents who do not frequent community centres.
14. Deferred Management Fee needs to be declared in all publicity/sales material. While figures/multiple examples might not be given, the reality must be stated clearly.

15. Pro rata basis should apply, otherwise a resident could incur an annual fee, yet have only completed, for example one month of twelve in the last year of residency.
16. An estimate of departure fees should be supplied on request.
17. Mandatory accreditation would be costly. However, the opportunity for an owner to undertake accreditation should be available, and the most recent accreditation should be listed in registration and sales materials.
18. A mandatory accreditation scheme should include all facets of the village -advertising, contracts, financial viability and transparency, facilities, maintenance compliance, managerial training and competence, security, complaint register, risk management and input from residents.
19. Voluntary accreditation schemes add credibility to the ownership and reassurance to residents if a timeframe is incurred for any suggested change.
20. Publication of strategic intent and accountability of completion in annual reports.
21. Yes, suitable training and/or experience in management and human relations.
22. Training is essential for competence and reliability of actions. Confidentiality and privacy are paramount when engaging in the lives of others. There should be a specific handover time for change of managers e.g. four weeks.
23. The equivalent of a particular management qualification or equivalent years of experience; or undertaking of specific units of study.
24. Yes, ongoing completion of qualification and completion of specified courses e.g. first aid, financial management. Training should be mandatory when hand-over to a new manager. The cost of training should be incurred by the owners not residents.
25. Residents Committees vary in power. Some are set up as advisory to management and are virtually controlled as such. There is little continuity of style and decision-making when new members are appointed to the committee. Confusion results. Some committees operate effectively while others cause concern when they seem to think it is their right to run the village.
26. No, Residents Committees should not be involved in dispute resolution. Residents lives can be greatly affected and committee members do not enter a village to intervene in issues which should be resolved by management. Many members do not have the training and/or right to intervene in others lives or managerial complaints.
27. No, all residents have a right to have their say. However, consideration needs to be given to whether a written vote is utilised. Many residents do not attend annual meetings and are not informed until the payment is announced.

28. There is a place for managers to attend Residents Committee Meetings for a specified time to clarify issues that might arise. Where there is a liaison officer appointed by the owner, this person might also attend.
29. Financial reporting becomes an issue because the requirement is of a minimal standard. Categorization allows for much to be undisclosed. The major maintenance account gives very little detail.
30. A financial statement should be distributed to residents at least fourteen days prior to the annual meeting.
31. Number and kind of disputes/complaints are not accurately recorded i.e. recorded as less and never discussed because of sensitivity and need for privacy.
32. No comment/not experienced.
33. Timeframes for addressing maintenance requests need to be specified and a register of all repairs kept annually.
34. Maintenance and repairs is a crucial issue in my experience. Residents genuine requests are many times ignored or not completed within suitable timeframes. Many maintenance issues are seen as the residents responsibility when they are part of the building. In contracts there should be specified time for refurbishment of a unit. The use of terms “normally”, “at their discretion” can mean that no refurbishment takes place. Outside maintenance of units is not addressed in many instances.
35. Maintenance and capital works need to be specified. Grey areas occur if issues are placed in guidelines e.g. window repairs seen a resident’s responsibility re leakage when in fact, they are part of the building.
36. Yes, such funds are essential. The percentage monies from sale of units varies – 2% is my experience - and frequently the answer re maintenance is that there is not enough money for the work to be done.
37. Specification of moneys available currently applies, but statement of intent and completion is vague and always at the owner’s discretion. The strategic advancement of a village does not seem to be understood by residents. Some moneys are spent on issues which are seen to benefit the owner but not the residents. Not sure how restrictions could apply.
38. I am a resident of a village and have been a carer for a relative for approximately five years. Privately funded services have been utilised successfully with no reference to the village.
39. No, retirement villages are not aged care facilities. In relation to choosing of service, for a retirement village to suggest one provider is questionable. My Aged Care has specific guidelines in relation to choose e.g, for packages. Residents could be influenced by managers which is not permissible or legal.

40. There is confusion re the welfare of residents and whose responsibility it is. Owners of retirement villages must provide safe environments but are not responsible for residents welfare re frailty. Medical attorney etc belongs with families and appointed persons. Again the distinction between retirement villages and aged care needs to be clear. These should not be specified within one document thus avoiding any confusion of what is state and what is federal responsibility for aged care.
41. Autonomy and privacy are paramount. Medical information should not be required by retirement villages e.g. to give to ambulance personnel. Such information is the responsibility of the resident or relative. Normal duty of care applies re surrounds and amenities but any interference in private matters, including health, and personal lives, is not the business of managers
42. Cannot comment except that refurbishment costs is a grey area.
43. As per 42.
44. ?
45. ?
46. The resident should work with management where possible to resolve an issue. However, a resident has the right to exercise their choice of means to address an issue, whether it be consumer affairs, a lawyer or... It is imperative that there is/are specified government department/agencies where information and help can be obtained.
47. No. A reasonable time for resolution in internal process should be a month then the resident has the right to any of their chosen means for resolution.
48. No.
49. Management should be responsible to resolve the issue where possible.
50. Don't know.
51. Consumer Affairs has been successful in my experience.

**THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE INPUT AS A RESIDENT OF A RETIREMENT VILLAGE**

**ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTION**