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Regulation Policy Consultation  
Department of Government Services

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## **Draft Regulations - Education and fees regulations for property industry professionals**

Dear Regulation Policy Consultation

Tenants Victoria is the peak body for the state's renters, who number almost 2 million people. Our vision is for safe, secure and affordable homes for Victorian renters in a fair housing system. We aim to empower all renters and make sure their voices are heard in our advocacy.

We are pleased to provide input into the draft regulations and Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) which sets new education and training requirements for property industry professionals, and Tenants Victoria thanks the Consumer Property Team for the short extension granted to make this submission.

Tenants Victoria has advocated recently for an increase in educational requirements for property professionals to address the inconsistency in the standard of service provision for renters. Real estate agents and property managers are often not sufficiently familiar with tenancy legislation to fulfill their duties, resulting in consequences for renters such as disputes unnecessarily escalating to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Real estate agents and property managers are the main providers of information to renters. It is essential that they have a comprehensive understanding of tenancy law and can communicate and apply it correctly for clients and renters. As such, Tenants Victoria welcomes the draft regulations which set initial training and continuing professional development (CPD) requirements for estate agents, estate agents' representatives, owners corporation (OC) managers and conveyancers, and amend licensing and registration fees for property professionals.

This submission outlines Tenants Victoria's preferences regarding the options presented in the RIS. While overall supportive, we see that the draft regulations should be strengthened by the inclusion of appropriate assessment in all CPD activities. This will enable the reforms to deliver meaningful improvements for renters and achieve the original aim of securing greater competency amongst property professionals.

### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for estate agents, agents' representatives and conveyancers**

The RIS introduces various CPD options to increase the competence of estate agents, agents' representatives and conveyancers. Tenants Victoria supports the government's preferred option, Option 2A (5 CPD activities per annum with less prescriptive CPD requirements), providing that this option is

changed to include an appropriate assessment as part of every CPD activity. Assessment will evidence the participant's knowledge acquisition and ability to apply their learnings to realistic practice-based scenarios.

### **Mandatory Assessment in CPD for estate agents, agents' representatives and conveyancers**

Tenants Victoria recommends that mandatory assessment be required as part of the CPD activities for estate agents, agents' representatives and conveyancers. The overarching aim of the draft regulations is to enhance consumer protection by ensuring that property professionals stay up to date with legislative reforms and have the necessary skills to fully comply with the law.<sup>1</sup>

To achieve this aim, CPD participants will need to fully engage with and understand what they have learnt and be able to apply this knowledge in the context of their professions. Including mandatory assessment as part of CPD is an evidence-based way to achieve knowledge acquisition and application and is common practice across many established professional sectors including health and finance.<sup>2</sup>

As outlined in the RIS, both New South Wales (NSW) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) require CPD for property professionals to include an assessment activity.<sup>3</sup> To fully achieve the aims of the reforms in the draft regulations, the Victorian Government should follow the precedent set by these other jurisdictions and ensure that the CPD option adopted includes mandatory assessment.

**Recommendation 1:** Adopt Option 2A as the preferred option from the RIS for estate agents, agents' representatives and conveyancers, with a requirement included for mandatory assessment for every CPD activity.

### **The definition of 'direct instruction' in the draft regulations**

The Estate Agents (Education) Amendment Regulations 2025 state at 12(1)(a) that content of CPD activities must "involve direct instruction, whether online or in person, from the continuing professional development provider to the person undertaking the activity". Tenants Victoria feels that the meaning of 'direct instruction' in this instance is not sufficiently clear and would benefit from further definition. For example, the NSW Government specifies that CPD for property professionals must be face-to-face or via an interactive webinar and must not be online self-paced learning.<sup>4</sup> Inclusion of this level of specificity and some examples in the draft regulations would make it easier for relevant stakeholders to implement these changes.

**Recommendation 2:** Provide a more specific definition of 'direct instruction' in the regulations, including some examples of what does and does not count as direct instruction.

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<sup>1</sup> Carrick, S., Jacques, M., Hartmann, Z. & Graham, D. (2025). Regulatory Impact Statement for Mandatory Training and Licensing Reforms for property industry professionals. Sapere. [Weblink](#).

<sup>2</sup> Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) (2025). Financial services – Continuing professional development (CPD).

<sup>3</sup> Carrick, S., Jacques, M., Hartmann, Z. & Graham, D. (2025). Regulatory Impact Statement for Mandatory Training and Licensing Reforms for property industry professionals. Sapere. [Weblink](#).

<sup>4</sup> NSW Government (2025). Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements for property professionals. [Weblink](#).

## Initial education and ongoing CPD for Owners Corporation (OC) Managers

The RIS introduces various options for initial education and ongoing CPD requirements for OC Managers. Importantly, a break-even analysis has been used to assess these options in the RIS.<sup>5</sup> This is because costs could be estimated with some certainty and there was less certainty about calculating benefits. The RIS acknowledges that the assessment of OC Managers' initial education and CPD is not likely to reflect the benefit to renters because those benefits are difficult to assess.

However, through our work with renters, Tenants Victoria is confident that there will be appreciable benefits to renters living in owners corporations if OC Managers are better professionally educated. In particular we expect a better understanding of renter rights and better and more constructive communication with lot owner rental providers and renters to resolve emerging issues and reduce costs, uncertainty and stress for renters. Any cost/benefit analysis must take into account the growth in and complexity of the owners corporation sector in the short to medium term.

For this reason, Tenants Victoria does not support Option 1 or Option 2 (the government's preferred option), as we feel they will not be sufficient to achieve the aim of greater competency for OC Managers. Tenants Victoria supports the adoption of Option 3 (5 CPD activities per annum and initial education of a full Certificate IV in Strata Community Management), providing that this option is changed to include an assessment as part of every CPD activity.

The education and training requirements do not vary depending on whether OC Managers work with tier 4 owners corporations or the significantly more complex tier 1-3 owners corporations, requiring more sophisticated financial statements and auditing, maintenance planning and governance. Because of this, the initial training and CPD should be based on the assumption that an OC Manager has the professional skills and knowledge to deal with all tiers of owners corporations.

OC Managers control large sums of money, handle significant legal and financial responsibilities and make decisions that directly affect living conditions for residents. As stated in the RIS, increasing numbers of Victorians (around 20%), including renters, live in strata properties under the management of an owners corporation.<sup>6</sup> This increase in people living in strata properties is likely to continue, given population growth trends and the government's planning policies that are encouraging an increase in medium to high density developments.<sup>7</sup>

As such, it is important that OC Managers receive a full qualification as an initial education, not just 3-5 units of the relevant certificate. Additionally, as stated in the RIS NSW requires OC Managers to have a full certificate as an initial educational requirement.<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, the aim of these new requirements is to build capability and competence within the profession, and this requires education standards that recognise the significant financial and legal responsibilities held by some OC Managers.

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<sup>5</sup> Carrick, S., Jacques, M., Hartmann, Z. & Graham, D. (2025). Regulatory Impact Statement for Mandatory Training and Licensing Reforms for property industry professionals. Sapere. [Weblink](#).

<sup>6</sup> Carrick, S., Jacques, M., Hartmann, Z. & Graham, D. (2025). Regulatory Impact Statement for Mandatory Training and Licensing Reforms for property industry professionals. Sapere. [Weblink](#).

<sup>7</sup> Victoria State Government (2025). Housing targets – Plan for Victoria. [Weblink](#).

<sup>8</sup> NSW Government (2025). Strata managing agent licence. [Weblink](#).

## **Mandatory assessment for OC Managers in CPD**

Tenants Victoria recommends that mandatory assessment be included as part of the ongoing CPD activities for OC Managers. As already established earlier in this submission, Tenants Victoria believes CPD activities need to include assessment to achieve the aims of these reforms and to ensure participants can meaningfully apply their learnings to their everyday work. None of the three options presented in the RIS for OC Managers included assessment as part of the proposed CPD activities. This is an oversight that should be rectified given the responsibilities held by OC Managers.

**Recommendation 3:** Adopt Option 3 as the preferred option from the RIS for OC Manager initial education and ongoing CPD, with a requirement included for mandatory assessment for every CPD activity.

## **Mandatory activity topics for CPD for estate agents, agents' representatives and conveyancers**

The draft regulations include, at Schedule 6 Regulation 12(3) in Estate Agents (Education) Amendment Regulations 2025, a list of topics for mandatory CPD activities for registered agents' representatives. Tenants Victoria supports the inclusion of the topics 'Responding to the occurrence or an allegation of family violence in a residential tenancy' and 'Discrimination in a residential tenancy'. However, these are not included on the list of topics for licensed estate agents at Schedule 5 Regulation 12(2), and Tenants Victoria recommends that this is changed, so that both agents' representatives and estate agents are required to complete CPD on family violence and discrimination in a residential tenancy.

Housing is an essential service and so a proportion of the community being serviced will inevitably have complex needs. As such it is essential that real estate agents, as well as property managers they may supervise, are adequately trained to respond appropriately to the occurrence of family violence within the context of a residential tenancy. This is now common practice in the community sector, public service, and many customer-facing roles in the private sector.

It would also be valuable to include training for property managers and real estate agents on dispute resolution and cultural safety, in light of the commencement of Rental Dispute Resolution Victoria (RDRV) and Government's ongoing commitment to Treaty.<sup>9</sup> Tenants Victoria would be pleased to be further consulted on the subject matter of the mandatory CPD topics in the draft regulations.

**Recommendation 4:** Amend Schedule 5 Regulation 12(2) in Estate Agents (Education) Amendment Regulations 2025 to include the topics 'Responding to the occurrence or an allegation of family violence in a residential tenancy' and 'Discrimination in a residential tenancy' for licensed estate agents.

## **Mandatory activity topics for CPD for OC Managers**

The draft regulations include, at Schedule 1 Regulation 7(2) in Owners Corporation (Education) Amendment Regulations 2025, a list of topics for mandatory CPD activities for OC Managers. Tenants Victoria recommends the regulations be amended to include CPD on 'Responding to the occurrence or an allegation of family violence in a residential tenancy' and the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* (RTA).

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<sup>9</sup> Premier of Victoria Hon Jacinta Allan MP (2025). Victoria's Treaty Becomes Law. [Weblink](#).

Tenants Victoria made a [submission](#) in September to the independent review of the *Owners Corporations Act 2006*. This submission highlighted that many issues can arise when renters living in strata properties require repairs or modifications that have to go through an owners corporation.<sup>10</sup> When having to rely on the owners corporation for structural repairs, renters can be affected by delays, a lack of information and control and confusion about who holds responsibility for repairs due to the complexity of the interplay between the RTA and the *Owners Corporations Act*.

In 2021, 48% of rental properties in Victoria were flats, apartments or semi-detached dwellings, and the number of renters in strata properties is likely to continue growing.<sup>11</sup> As such, Tenants Victoria feels it is important that OC Managers have a solid understanding of the RTA, and rental issues that can arise in the context of family violence.

**Recommendation 5:** Amend Schedule 1 Regulation 7(2) in Owners Corporations (Education) Regulations 2025 to include topics for CPD relating to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* and responding to the occurrence or an allegation of family violence in a residential tenancy.

### **Tenants Victoria as an organisation approved to deliver CPD**

We note that Tenants Victoria has been listed in the Estate Agents (Education) Amendment Regulations 2025 at Schedule 7 as an organisation approved to deliver CPD for estate agents and agents' representatives. Tenants Victoria is supportive of this inclusion, and we note that we are not currently funded to perform this function.

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<sup>10</sup> Tenants Victoria (2025). Submission to the Expert Panel Review of the Owners Corporation Act 2006. [Weblink](#).

<sup>11</sup> Commissioner for Residential Tenancies (2024). Renting in Victoria: 2024 Snapshot. [Weblink](#).