

MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 14 September 2019

“WHAT’S IN A NAME”, WHEN IT COMES TO SHORT-TERM RENTALS IN NSW?

As Shakespeare wrote, “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet”. What though if one were to substitute ‘a rose’ with a good old ‘Aussie stinker’?

According to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment’s (DPIE) [‘Discussion paper’](#), the Holiday Rental Industry Association (HRIA) was invited onto a Short Term Rental Advisory Committee, while NSW Council for Civil Liberties and Resident Groups were excluded. Former HRIA Chair Trevor Atherton was good enough to confirm to the [Victorian Parliament](#) that short-term holiday rentals in NSW are “illegal” and that one “can’t come along after a land use is legal and make it illegal (or vice versa, obviously,) without paying compensation”. [Trevor Atherton’s credentials](#) pretty much speak for themselves; one assumes he knew what he was asserting before a Parliamentary hearing.

HRIA has since changed it’s name – it’s now the Australian Short Term Rental Accommodation Industry Association ([ASTRA](#)) and they are “here to stay”. Why the name change – what connections could be made? Between them, the NSW-based [ASTRA board members](#) have around 1,025 of these so-called “illegal” holiday rentals:

- **Chairperson Rob Jeffress has at least 485:** [Beach Stays/Northern Beaches holidays](#) (71), [Pacific Palms](#) (123), [Tea Gardens](#) (90), [Pacific Coast](#) (106), [Liberty Property](#) (3), [HomHero/East Coast](#) (89), and Landmark Collections’ [Blueys Beach House](#), [Ellengowan Leura](#) and [Barrenjoey Beach House](#) (3).
- **Treasurer Tim Court** claims he has “over 500 STRA properties...”. We believe him.
- **David Harris** has [7 listings](#)
- **PR Contact Peta Morrison** has 2 listings in Bundeena – a small ‘cabin’ and a [15-person rental](#). Federal Building Code compliance?
- **Jindabyne-based Joan Bird** has [28 listings](#)

A competing short-term agent in Joan Bird’s Local Council area changed its name after the [death of a four-year-old child](#) in one of its holiday homes. Still offering 70 holiday rentals, memories of the incident too odious perhaps.

ASTRA writes that its “hard working volunteer directors” have been given “a weeks grace” to ‘have their say’ on State Parliament’s plans to make holiday rentals a legal commercial activity state wide. For others, the DPIE’s application “[form is now closed to new submissions](#)”. ASTRA gets special treatment, while those who oppose illegal short-term rentals – ASTRA’s “antagonists” – can no longer add their call for protection of homes, housing for tenants, residential communities, proprietary rights and the rights of accredited accommodation providers.

ASTRA is looking forward to sharing the long awaited ‘Code of Conduct’ that is bound to be as ineffective as the current ‘Code’, in place now for seven years. [Land and Environment Court](#) and other [case law precedent](#) will see the Holiday Rental Mob’s ‘silver bullet’ fart, fizzle and fail, which will please ASTRA, Airbnb and Stayz no end.

One of the highest profile short-term rental actors in Australia, who featured alongside [Kaila Murnain](#) in our Shadow Tourism Minister’s [inaugural speech to Parliament](#) has seen many of his ‘friends’/contacts take centre stage at the [current hearings of the Independent Commission Against Corruption](#) (ICAC). Wait! What exactly is that smell?

Homes not Hotels Communities not Transit Zones People before Profits Neighbours not Strangers

 <p>ASTRA - Australian Short Term Rental Accommodation Association</p> <p>With a weeks grace in consideration of our hard working volunteer directors, ASTRA’s submission for the the discussion paper and questions asked for the long awaited STRA industry regulations, is almost complete.</p> <p>As was expected it has once again raised so many discussions and more questions than it asked.</p> <p>Against the opposition of our antagonists our submission will represent the interests of you the STRA industry participants</p> <p>We look forward to sharing with you and the introduction of the long awaited Code of Conduct. Whilst we recognise that some aspects will not please everyone, we believe it will be a great step forward.</p>	 <p>Philip Thalys</p> <p>The loss of housing for rent posed by unregulated sub markets like Airbnb are a big issue. We don’t need to further inflame housing affordability.</p>  <p>The community impact of Airbnb calls for closer scrutiny sydney.edu.au</p>
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