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## **JANUARY 2024 – MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER**

### **President's Message**

Over the past six months, we have let you know of the expected minor, but significant changes to *The Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003 (MHRP)* as a result of the work behind the scenes of a small group of MPs led by Bruce Saunders (Maryborough). This parcel of work was completely separate from the Consultation – Regulatory Impact Statement (C-RIS) conducted in June 2023 – the government receiving your feedback.

These modifications would have provided immediate relief to the tens of thousands of homeowners in residential parks throughout Queensland while the MHRP underwent revision or a complete re-write. And we know that this can be done – think about the rent reforms pushed through Parliament in August 2023 limiting rent rises to once per year. The changes promised were:

- Changes to Section 69 so that the basis on which annual site fee increases are calculated is restricted.
- The Market Rent Review would be removed, and
- That the dispute mechanism would be taken away from QCAT to a body which can make decisions quickly and fairly – without the interference of corporate lawyers representing park owners.

First the timeline for these changes was before Christmas 2023, then the first sitting of Parliament 13, 14, 15 February. As late as 10 January 2024, we were still being assured that the changes would come to the floor of Parliament. This all changed on 22 January 2024 when we received a phone call from the Assistant Housing Minister, Ali King (Pumicestone), who seemed unaware of the work behind the scenes by Bruce Saunders and his colleagues,

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advising that reforms would be introduced to Parliament in April – but “*we would be happy with the changes*”. In both instances, the advice received was confidential.

Following the end of Parliamentary sittings, we approached the Member for Maryborough seeking clarification of the necessary and urgent changes and an anticipated timeline. On 22 February 2024 we received advice from the Minister’s Office which confirms that the minor changes are lost, and that the Government intends to proceed with reforms solely based on the options proposed in the C-RIS which was based on the *Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025* the focus of which as we advised in our submission, was too narrow to overhaul the MHRP Act. And the timeline now is “the first half of 2024”. It does seem that due to the overwhelming response to the consultation, the diverse views of stakeholders on the options offered, and the significant impact of some options, the government is taking a “softly, softly” approach. The legislative change process will include the opportunity for key stakeholders to make further representations to a parliamentary committee.

As homeowners in residential parks wait for the government to change this piece of legislation, we encourage you to ask your Member of Parliament:

**Why** is it that under the MHRP Act where we own, insure and maintain our homes, renting only the land on which the home sits that we have less rights than tenants in the wider community under *The Residential Tenancies & Rooming Accommodation Act 2008 (RTRA)* where a tenant’s financial commitment under the RTRA extends to a bond of about one month’s rent in advance, whereas homeowners in residential parks have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy in to what is an excellent housing model?

**Why** are homeowners not considered the major (or at the very least an equal) stakeholder in the relationship with the Park Owner?

**Why** will the government not acknowledge that the problems being experienced by homeowners were exacerbated by the Labor Government during the review 2017-2019? And despite being advised time and again, this Government has shown no willingness or appetite to repair what they have broken!

**Why** does the MHRP Act, which seeks to ensure the viability of the industry not see that if this model becomes unsustainable for homeowners there will be no industry?

**Why** should homeowners in residential parks have to be patient while experiencing behaviours by park owners, which are always found reasonable by the Residential Services Unit (RSU), the Department charged with ensuring compliance of the Act?

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**Why** does the government not understand that the dispute mechanism is broken taking up to four years to have matters resolved through the QCAT system.

We have also approached David Crisafulli, Leader of the LNP, and his Shadow Housing Minister, Tim Mander, asking their plans for the residential parks industry should they win government in October – **no response**. In fact, over the past couple of years, while Mr Mander has been helpful, Mr Crisafulli has refused to engage.

We hope you will work with us to place pressure on the Government through your local state member to effect the necessary, urgent changes to the MHRP Act. Homeowners living in residential parks include some of the most vulnerable in society, and the MHRP Act must be changed to ensure it does what it is supposed to do – **protect them!**

Roseann Whyte

**AMHO President**

## **Electricity Load Shedding of Villages**

During the recent heatwave, members advised of loss of power to their parks which they thought at the time was understandable. However, they were astonished when driving out of their park, to find all homes around them had power, meaning the outage was only in the village. We have since been told that a number of Manufactured Home parks and Retirement villages in the Moreton/Caboolture area lost power and it appears that the electricity authority has chosen to Load Shed the Embedded Networks to reduce the load on the grid. Is it a quick easy way out to remove a large group of consumers off the grid, with no thought for the many older people living in these villages, who rely on power for their health problems? If you were affected by this, contact your local state Member of Parliament and the Ombudsman at the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ) at <https://www.ewoq.com.au>

## **Cost of Living Electricity Rebate**

Members have contacted AMHO advising that they have still not received their Government Cost of Living Rebate. If your park owner has not yet passed on this rebate, please contact us with the details of where you live along with the park owner's reason for nonpayment of this rebate. We also suggest you also contact your Member of Parliament **and** the Electricity Ombudsman at <https://www.ewoq.com.au>

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## **AMHO is Booking Park Visits for 2024**

AMHO look forward to meeting with our members and other residents in your park. If you would like AMHO to provide a presentation and Q and A session, updating your home owners on their rights and responsibilities under the Act, please contact our Secretary Carol Fitzpatrick on 0418 527 041 or email [secretary@amho.com.au](mailto:secretary@amho.com.au) to arrange a date and time.

## **WEBSITE & EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES**

AMHO was grateful for the support of so many who helped us to get up and running as the Alliance of Manufactured Home Owners Inc (AMHO) publicly launched in March 2022. We relied on many for assistance with the website and used Gmail for our emails as a temporary measure. AMHO is proud of our achievements working with State Members of Parliament, we have informed you of your rights regarding the recent C-RIS, and assisted our members and others who have contacted us. AMHO is now regarded as a Peak Body by Government, and we thank you all for your support.

We have now developed a new website, one we can afford to keep running, and more importantly, it will provide our association with safe email addresses. Our aim is to make it pleasurable to visit, easy to navigate, and we invite you to use this link <https://amho.com.au> to take a look. We will be adding and updating the content regularly, including bringing back information videos in the future.

*Our new AMHO email addresses are –*

**[info@amho.com.au](mailto:info@amho.com.au)**  
**[president@amho.com.au](mailto:president@amho.com.au)**  
**[secretary@amho.com.au](mailto:secretary@amho.com.au)**  
**[treasurer@amho.com.au](mailto:treasurer@amho.com.au)**  
**[membership@amho.com.au](mailto:membership@amho.com.au)**

Please stay on this journey with us, why not invite your friends and neighbours to join, as the more members we have, the louder our voice will be. Thank you all for your support and the valuable information you provide, we are truly grateful.

**Alliance of Manufactured Home Owners Inc**

*Supporting Queensland Manufactured Home Owners*

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