



Discussion Forum

The comments and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the Retirement Village Residents Association (RVRA) or its Members.

Manager's wife to attend meetings.

Thanks for the replies so far. We have agreement that the matter must be handled carefully.

Our concern is that we are about to enter \$300,000 or so worth of serious dispute with management. This will, following the example of Queen Lake, require considerable regular discussion with residents.

We already have an example of intimidation by the manager, initiated at least in part by his wife. So, we have no confidence we can hold meetings free from management influence, as envisaged by the act, if the wife attends. Most residents are concerned, undoubtable coloured by our recent experience, that if the manager's wife attends it will inhibit free discussion, to the point some have the view they may not attend.

The act is not specific on this point. It does prescribe that management and management representatives can only attend by invitation.

It seems not to envisage the possibility of a manager and wife as residents, and the consequent practical effect of the wife attending meetings is as if the manager was present.

While there are many matters for which an invitation is appropriate, dispute proceedings is not one. Residents cannot rely on an effective "Chinese Wall" between the manager and his wife, so any documents or discussion become immediately available to management, including who said what. This opens the door to possible "divide and conquer" approaches by management to individual residents, with no safeguards against intimidation or guaranteed all residents get the same or even factual information from management.

Residents are not entitled to details of management's meetings so why, defacto, should management be entitled to details of ours.

Our committee is of the view the manager's wife is de facto (in the legal sense of that phrase) a manager's representative, and therefore subject to attendance by invitation. If the law cannot be interpreted to apply the same conditions of attendance to the wife as it does to the manager and representatives, then it should be modified to do so.

If our interpretation is not correct, as seems likely from the comments thus far, residents may be have to consider casual discussions without the wife's presence, followed by official meetings that guillotine through pre-agreed motions. Not nice, likely to create possible legal issues management may use to sidetrack the main dispute and surely not the intent of the Act.

We have asked the Department of Fair Trading for their advice, but any assistance anyone out there can give on this prickly issue would be greatly appreciated.

Someone must have an brainwave answer to the question how can we have meetings free from indirect management influence, leakage of proceedings to management via the wife and the many possible undesirable consequences of that?

(Though you have only a small part of our saga, you may understand our village is considering adopting as its motto the Chinese curse "May you live in interesting times" Gotta retain our balance somehow!)

John Thompson
10th September 2011
