



Residents of Retirement Villages Victoria Inc.
Representing Residents

Reg.No. 0048146R ABN 2034 1655161 www.rvv.org.au

31 August 2014.

David Hatfield.
Director,
Adjudication Branch,
Australian Competition &
Consumer Commission.
GPO Box 3131.
Canberra ACT 2601
Ref. TRACKIT 54042

Dear Mr Hatfield,

**National Roads and Motorists' Association Limited Certification Trade
Mark Application – interested party consultation**

Residents of Retirement Villages Victoria (RRVV) thank you for asking for our comments on this very important issue.

Having read through the proposed structure for this scheme I feel although the intention sounds good it is fraught with problems. I have listed some questions that I feel should be answered before this rating system for services is certified

1. The decision to move into and then choose a retirement village should not be taken lightly nor could it be compared with booking accommodation in a holiday resort. Prospective retirement village residents are investing thousands of dollars in most cases almost all of the money they hold, it's a lifetime decision. It is a very important choice as once they are in the village, they cannot leave without losing a huge slice of their investment which may prohibit them from buying elsewhere.
2. How hard is it to win these 'owls'? Does anyone who pays a fee win an owl? I would like to know how these standards are attained. If a village has all the greatest Community Facilities, do they win the highest points, despite having bad manager, who is as nice as pie to the assessor? But who has little time for the residents. How will the assessor discover the true situation as intimidation and bullying in these villages occurs too often?
3. Who pays the fee? This is usually put on the resident's monthly maintenance fee, despite the company using it as a marketing tool.
4. Is the difference between the 'owl's' transparent and who set the standards and the questions? In general I found the questions to be asked of residents loaded to ensure a positive outcome. If they want a totally independent organisation to formulate questions then NRMA should look to the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) who would be able to supply the questions in the proper format for a true result. The selection of residents should be

Lesley Menzies - President

Unit 32 Bellbrook Gardens Village, 168 Underbank Blvd, BACCHUS MARSH 3340
03) 5310 6332 0408 412 413 lesleyowen44@gmail.com



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totally at random and not selected by Management or Owners and has to be completely anonymous. How can this be guaranteed? If these checks are not carried out in secret the whole process will be useless, as resident will not feel at ease to answer the questions honestly.

5. What if residents complain to NRMA that there is actually really bad service? I did not read of any process where complaints could be received and considered. If this happened would the village lose its owl before the two year expiry date?
6. I would like to know who is the Retirement Village Industry expert? Surely not from the Retirement Living Council I hope? We work and were originally formed by COTA however RRVV is the peak group which deals with Retirement Village issues and disputes.
7. Will the NRMA have a disclaimer where they accept no responsibility for any loss or damage you may suffer as a reliance on any part of the information they provide?

Please excuse me if I sound cynical but RRVV is the association that deals with the problems that occur in retirement villages. I feel if a true accreditation of Retirement Villages were to be undertaken it should be mandatory for ALL villages and should be undertaken by the State or Federal Government. It is a complicated issue for both the Retirement Living Industry as well as the residents due to the lack of a proper legislative structure.

If you feel you would like to contact me further to discuss any of the above issues. please feel free to phone or email me on my contact details below.

Yours Sincerely

Lesley Menzies
President
RRVV