

Publication Date: 14 April 2020
YSP Podcast Transcript: Episode 209. NSW Property Industry Reforms: How are Strata Managers Impacted?

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Intro: Welcome to Your Strata Property, the podcast for property owners looking for reliable, accurate, and bite-sized information from an experienced and authoritative source. To access previous episodes and useful strata tips go to www.yourstrataproperty.com.au.

Amanda Farmer: Hello and welcome. I'm Amanda Farmer and this is Episode Number 209 of the Your Strata Property podcast. This is the place where I help you to make sense of this crazy world that is apartment living. This week, we are getting behind-the-scenes of some changes that have recently happened to the regulation of our strata managing agents. There were some pretty significant reforms that took place in New South Wales on the 23rd of March 2020. You'll be forgiven if these flew under the radar for you. A few other things going on in the world at the moment. But I had a chat with Sasha Boe from Real Estate Training Solutions and she has explained the need-to-know behind these reforms for our strata managing agents. I'll take you over to that chat very soon.

First up, a quick word about COVID. I do want to make sure that you know you can access up-to-date information and resources about COVID-19 and strata living over at our dedicated webpage, covidandapartments.info. That is the place that I have set up as your information hub to find the links to helpful resources, websites, up-to-date information. It is also where you will find the link to the replay of last week's mega webinar, [Safe and Harmonious Apartment Living During COVID-19](#). A webinar brought to you by city of Sydney council, which I guest-hosted. I've called it a mega webinar because we had well over 600 people registered for that webinar. Owners, strata managers, committee members, and very close to 500 actually turning up, tuning in on the day, which is just massive for a webinar. I've been running webinars for a couple of years now and we usually operate on the assumption that maybe about 50% of those who register will turn up, and I was just blown away by the interest, the need for that information.

There has been a bit of confusion, COVID confusion I've been calling it, circulating for our apartment buildings, for our strata owners. And, that webinar was a great place to provide some clarity to answer lots and lots of questions and bring together, if you like, some of the loose ends that have been causing some anxiety. I was really happy to be able to give peace of mind to many of you through that webinar. So, you can absolutely check out the replay. If you go to covidandapartments.info, you will see a link there in the list of resources to the webinar replay. And thank you once again to Megan Chatterton at City of Sydney Council for doing all the hard work that goes into organising a webinar of that scale, and so quickly as well.

Now, I'm about to take you over to my chat with Sasha Boe. Sasha is a previous podcast guest. You first heard from her way back in Episode 109, exactly 100 episodes ago. We managed that well. Sasha is the Managing Director of Real Estate Training Solutions. Established in 2003, Real Estate Training Solutions, or RETS for short, is an ASQA registered training organisation that provides accredited training to New South Wales property agents, and as you'll hear Sasha is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to the ins and outs of training and education for our strata managers, including the types of qualifications now necessary to be able to carry out particular functions within strata management.

Now you'll hear Sasha and I about halfway through our chat talk about trust accounts, and we're referring to the trust accounts that our strata managers operate on behalf of our owners corporations in New South Wales, and Sasha drew to my attention that while these new regulations actually prevent certain license holders from authorising certain transactions on trust accounts, that doesn't apply to our Class 2 Strata Managing Agents.

And you'll hear me say that I just wanted to look up some law on that to be clear where that is set out in the new regulation, and you'll find that in Regulation 4C of the Property Stock Agents Regulation, which makes clear that a strata managing agent who holds a Class 1 or Class 2 license may exercise all managing agent functions with the exception that only the licensee-in-charge can deal with the business's trust account. That is, the trust account that may belong to the agency itself, that being of course, more relevant to real estate agents than strata managing agents. There is otherwise no prohibition on a strata managing agent authorising transactions or the withdrawal of money from an owners corporation trust account. Of course, with all the usual authorities and instructions that must be given by an owners corporation to its strata managing agent.

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Amanda Farmer: There's a good summary of this over on the New South Wales Fair Trading website. There is a link to that page in the show notes to this episode. It clearly sets out the changes and relevant changes to authorised functions for the different license classes. There's also links in the show notes to the relevant legislation, bearing in mind that the Property Stock and Business Agents Act in New South Wales has now been renamed the Property and Stock Agents Act.

So with that, here is your crash course in the property industry reforms having taken effect in New South Wales on the 23rd of March. So far as they impact our strata managers, you're getting the need to know with Sasha Boe. Sasha Boe, how are you today?

Sasha Boe: Good, thank you. Doing very well.

Amanda Farmer: Excellent to hear. It's great to have you on the show again. It has been some time, way back in [Episode 109](#) we were chatting about this raft of changes that was due in New South Wales when it comes to licensing and CPD requirements for strata managers. That was back in July, 2018. I think it was due to start the 1st of July 2018. Am I right that nothing happened between then and now?

Sasha Boe: Pretty much. We've been waiting. So I think the Act was approved at the beginning of 2018, and we've been waiting for the regulations, which finally came into effect on the 23rd of March. So, there was a huge gap and things I think got pushed through. You would think why would it be pushed through when it took so damn long for it to happen, but in the end, everything just got pushed through the 23rd of March. And look, the Residential Tenancy Act got pushed through then, too.

So, as far as the property sector goes, there was a lot of implementation of a lot of significant changes on the 23rd of March.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, 23rd of March 2020, which in the world as a whole has been a very interesting time. We're recording this at the beginning of April, and we're all very much still in that interesting time. So, we've had changes commencing 23rd of March to some qualification education training requirements for real estate agents for strata managers. We've also had new Residential Tenancy Act provisions commence on that date. What I'd really liked to talk to you about today, Sasha, is to walk us through these reforms so far as they impact our strata managers. And, my understanding is when it comes to training, when it comes to licensing, CPD requirements, our strata managers are impacted by these changes.

I haven't had a close look at them. I have been saving up for my chat with you, so fill us in. What's the need to know here for strata managers?

Sasha Boe: Ok, so I guess in the property sector, the strata managers, we've definitely been impacted. Not as greatly as the real estate sector, but definite changes to the property sector. So probably the biggest change that's going to impact these guys in the strata sector is the change to classes of license. So, we operated on a two tier license structure in the past. So, what we're seeing now is this three tiered license structure.

So, certificate of registration holders, so we start at the bottom, are now going to be called assistant agents. All right, so I'll talk about the qualification requirements you'll see around those in a second. So, I'll just run through the different classes of licenses first. So, what agents will find if they jump onto the New South Wales Fair Trading website, and they were to be the registration holders, they will see if they look themselves up, which they can do, they will see that they've actually been flipped into what's called an assistant agent. So, that's the first new change, I guess. Certificates of registrations are now called assistant agents.

The next class is the Class 2, which is a strata agent and that person would normally have been just a strata agent that we know from previously. And then, we've got another class which is the Class 1, which is the licensee-in-charge class. So significantly for the strata sector, what we found is with the qualification requirements, we've been sitting on a 3 unit course for the certificate of registration. We are now sitting at a 7 unit course for the certificate of registration, or that assistant agent. The Certificate IV, or the qualification required to become a Class 2 agent hasn't changed. So, for strata agents it is still exactly the same. So, they still need

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to fulfill that Cert IV to become a Class 2 agent. And the Class 1, that's changed significantly as well.

They need to do a diploma to become a Class 1 agent. Another significant change that's sitting in underneath there is a time requirement. So, you can't just do your Certificate IV and become a Class 2 strata agent. You have to show that you've operated as an assistant agent for a 12 month period, and there is a log of things that you need to make sure that you've completed in that 12 month timeframe. Fair Trading haven't actually released ... There's a record and you have to put it in a certain paperwork that they want you to fill in to show that. There is apparently going to be some type of online upload system eventually on the Fair Trading website where that can go. It's not there at the moment.

And, I'm not quite sure how they're going to be checking up until that point but at this stage you have to, if you're an assistant agent and you want to go to a strata agent essentially, you'll have to do a Certificate IV qualification and you have to show 12 months experience plus that log of certain things that you have to complete. If you want to see a list of what that log includes, you can see it in the back of the regulations for the changes to the stock.

Property and Stock Agents Act, so you'll find those in the back of that regulation if you need to see a list of those requirements. Amanda Farmer: And, I will put a link to both the relevant page on the Fair Trading website and also to the legislation itself under this episode, so our listeners can go and check that out. Sasha, you've mentioned there the three tiers, assistant agents, the strata agents and Class 1 licensees in charge. Do you have any data around or do you know what most of our strata managers, say in New South Wales where we both are, are practicing under? Are they mostly certificate of registration holders or do they fall into this Class 2 strata agents?

Yes look, the statistics that come out of Fair Trading New South Wales is about 50,000 licensed or certificate of registration holders in the property sector in New South Wales. The stats are showing there's about 26,000 certificate of registration holders. Now, there's obviously going to be some of those are obviously strata certificate of registration holders. So, they haven't got specific figures for us that we can access on the number that are actually strata certificate registration holders, but they will, from my experience being in and out of strata offices, most people have their certificate of registration.

That's what they're operating on. Now, it's probably a good time to mention that within 4 years, if you're a current certificate of registration holder and you rolled into your assistant agent on the 23rd of March, you now have 4 years to progress to a Certificate IV or Class 2 license. This is now a requirement of New South Wales Fair Trading. You can not operate just on your certificate of registration assistant agent qualification anymore. You have to be shown to be progressing to a full Certificate IV Class 2 license.

Now, Fair Trading is saying if you haven't don't that by 2024, which is where we'll end up after that 4 years, you will be kicked out essentially of the sector for 12 months.

Amanda Farmer: Wow.

Sasha Boe: Yes, so it's a considerable change so agents really need to be aware, I guess if you're a licensee-in-charge, of where your staff are at as far as their qualifications. A little training audit in the office to see these skills in order to see where everyone's up to is great idea, and they need to be progressing towards their Cert IV. And, Fair Trading has mandated that there's a minimum of 3 units that someone has to complete per year. So, if you're a certificate of registration assistant agent, then you have to progress to that Cert IV in 4 years, you have to do a minimum of 3 units a year. If Fair Trading audits you, that's what they'll want to see. They'll want to see that you've completed three units from that Cert IV every year leading up to the 4 year time frame.

Amanda Farmer: Ok.

Sasha Boe: If that makes sense.

Amanda Farmer: It does, yes. You mentioned earlier a 12 month period to progress over to strata agent. What's that about?

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Sasha Boe: Ok, so we've got quite a few new requirements now that seep from the assistant agent to a Class 2. So, you have to progress from an assistant agent to a Class 2 license. You have to. There's no just sitting on your certificate of registration anymore. If you decide you want to be a strata agent, you can't just do a Cert IV and become a strata agent anymore. You have to do your assistant agent certificate, which is 7 units. You then need to show that you've held that position for 12 months and you need to complete your full Certificate IV to become a Class 2 license.

Fair Trading is giving you 4 years to get to that point. You can do it faster, but that's just the stipulation around Fair Trading requirements.

Amanda Farmer: Ok, so those strata managers who are listening, those licensees-in-charge who are thinking about their staff, they can work with their certificate of registration holders, the formally certificate of registration holders, now assistant agents, to get them moving across to that strata agent Class 2 qualification?

Sasha Boe: Yes.

Amanda Farmer: And, they can do that within 12 months if they're able to do the required units, and you mentioned filling in a-

Sasha Boe: There's a list of jobs they have to show that they've actually undertaken in that 12 months. It's quite prescriptive. When I say prescriptive, there's a list but they're not so prescriptive that someone who's doing a normal strata management job wouldn't be fulfilling. So, it's not too onerous. It's just you need to make sure that you're signing off, and my understanding is that the licensee-in-charge will have to sign off to say that those have been completed, those roles have been undertaken.

Amanda Farmer: Ok. Why would a strata manager who is sitting on the new assistant agent qualification want to progress? I hear what you said that it's mandatory over four years. Is there some greater recognition for strata agents? Are there more responsibilities, duties? How do you see this playing out practically in a strata management office? What different things, I suppose, would the strata agents be doing as compared to the certificate of registration holders?

Sasha Boe: Look, essentially unless you're just back office and doing a support role, if you're just doing the normal strata management role but have been under your certificate of registration, really it's just you're ticking a box to say you have progressed and you've completed further training. Anyone who's been working as a certificate of registration assistant agent for any amount of time will be undertaken all the roles anyway as what is a Class 2 strata manager. They'll get recognition of prior learning, so if they're having to undertake that Cert IV, they don't have to go and do any additional training. Really, if they're an experienced person, they'll be able to undertake that pathway through the recognition of prior learning or RPL pathway, which recognises their current skills knowledge, and we map that across and go, "Hey, you're already doing this. We're not going to make you undertake training. You're proficient. You're competent."

Then, we can sign off to say that they can do those things as they move towards their Cert IV. So, for people who have had some time in the sector, it doesn't have to be onerous. It's really for those new people that would have to go, "Oh, I know nothing about strata. I'm going to have to do the full Certificate IV." But, people who are experienced, it shouldn't be too much of a trouble or a bother hopefully.

Amanda Farmer: And, I would have thought from a business owner perspective, being able to tell your clients, tell your buildings that you have qualified strata agents working for them as opposed to assistant agents ... So I'm quite interested in this terminology change. They've made quite clear that someone on a certificate of registration is an assistant agent, they're not a strata agent. So, I suppose if I put myself in the shoes of the client and I'm working with my strata manager and I inquire about their qualifications and they say they're an assistant agent, I think, "Oh, does that mean that they're qualified to manage my building? Shouldn't I have a strata agent with a higher level of qualification?"

Sasha Boe: Yes, it's interesting. Fair Trading has made it very, very clear, too. If you are an assistant agent, you can not infer in

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any way, on your business card, for example, or on your signature on your emails, that you are anything other than an assistant agent. So, you can't put strata manager. You can probably use different terminology completely but they can't be any inference around the fact that you're a Class 2 or a strata manager. You have to use assistant agent or nothing at all.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, and am I right that that hasn't been the case on a certificate of registration? Maybe this is more a question for the strata management companies, but are there agents out there on a certificate of registration calling themselves strata managers?

Sasha Boe: I think up until now, I don't think that's been a problem because there hasn't been any stipulation around this assistant agent terminology. Look, I know when the consultation was going on from the strata sector, I remember hearing the buzz that they were not happy about having to... Yes, they might have been strata manager looking after executive communities, whatever, to now have to be called an assistant agent. It didn't sit well and I get it. You're experienced people. The emphasis is probably to get up to speed with that Class 2 and get you qual done as soon as you can. They will recognise your experience retrospectively, too.

So, let's just say you're being rolled into an assistant agent. You've been working the sector for 10 years. Get your Cert IV and then launch your application to go up to your Class 2 and then you can show your experience retrospectively. It's not 12 months experience from the 23rd of March. You can show experience that goes back for however long you've got it.

Amanda Farmer: Ok, good to know. Now tell me, Sasha, are there any changes with this Class 1, the licensee-in-charge? What are their qualification requirements, education requirements, new responsibilities, new duties?

Sasha Boe: Look, the changes around the Class 1 license, there's a lot of support around these. The changes that I'm about to explain will stop someone say going to TAFE and doing ... An 18 year old going to TAFE straight out of school and doing a diploma and then starting their strata business next year. It's going to stop people who have no idea about how this job, the strata sector runs from just opening a business and starting it. So, it's a risk strategy which I know there's been a good bit of support in the sector around this.

What it means is if you're a current licensee-in-charge, you've been identified to Fair Trading probably by now that that's what you do, and you will be rolled straight into a Class 1 license. If you are coming in to the sector and you say, "Hey, I want to open a strata business and become a licensee-in-charge," there is now a very clear pathway. So, you have to start at the assistant agent. You have to get that 12 months experience, moving towards getting your Certificate IV Class 2. You then need to sit on your Class 2 license for two years before you can apply for your diploma or become a Class 1 licensee-in-charge.

So, moving forward there's pretty much a three year pathway from getting into the sector to opening your own business. And like I said, it's great, I think, because we're just not getting people who are getting into the sector and just starting a business with no idea about how even a strata sector works. So, it's a bit of experience there before they're allowing you to take on trust accounts and manage staff. So, I think it's a good thing. That's the biggest change.

Amanda Farmer: And you might've said this earlier, Sasha, but what has the pathway been for moving to the licensee-in-charge from that strata manager role as opposed to certificates of registration? If you are a strata manager moving to a licensee-in-charge, you could just do it?

Sasha Boe: Yes, pretty much. Pretty much. Yes, there was no formal pathway. There was no differentiation between ... Everyone just did your Certificate IV, and once you go into Certificate IV, if you were the licensee-in-charge, you'd get your corporation license and whatever else you needed to do as far as Fair Trading and starting your business. But yes, you would just do that role. You'd be the supervisor, so you'd have some supervisory guidelines that you'd have to follow, but there was no that next level up, which is what we have now. There's a differentiation between just your Class 2 and your Class 1.

Amanda Farmer: Ok. And, there was some talk way back in 2018 about trust account requirements and signing off on trust

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monies, moving money around. Where has that ended up now in 2020?

Sasha Boe: All right. Really interesting-

Amanda Farmer: Did I put you on the spot?

Sasha Boe: No, no, no. Not at all, because I just want to make sure I've got the wording right. Ok, so assistant agents can not operate or touch a trust account essentially. But, I was at a session with Fair Trading ... When was it? Just before everything changed, so it would have been a couple weeks ago, so early March ... and this little tiny bit came up on the PowerPoint that no one really noticed, and I went back and read the PowerPoint again. I'm like, "Wait a second." This is what it says in the PowerPoint. I'm going to read it out word-for-word.

The licensee-in-charge is the only person who can authorise the release of money from the agency's trust accounts. This does not apply to the accounts of the owners corporation in strata.

Amanda Farmer: What?

Sasha Boe: Yes. So, it would appear that strata agents have jumped up and down a little and said, "Hey, we need to be able to pay bills or do things in the owners corporation." They have all these little trust accounts sitting within an organisation. It's a big job for one licensee-in-charge of a large strata company, or even a smaller one because there could often be lots of trust accounts, to have to press the button and say, "Go" on all of those little baby whatever they are trust accounts.

So yes, obviously they've come up with something and said, "Well, strata agents are exempt for the owners corporation accounts." So, it could be something that needs to be dug into a little bit. It was, like I said, just one little sentence on one page of this giant PowerPoint so for the strata sector that could be a bit of a reprieve.

Amanda Farmer: Ok, I'm going to have a closer look at that for our listeners and I will dig into the supporting regulations and see if I can find that, and in the intro to this episode, I will make sure that I give that clarification. Very interesting.

Sasha Boe: Yes, it is and it's better you interpret it with your legal hat on than me try to interpret it. Significant, though.

Amanda Farmer: Sasha, ongoing CPD? Are there changes there for both licensees-in-charge and your Class 2?

Sasha Boe: Yes, significant changes. So, we're not calling things hours anymore. We're calling them points. So, that's the first thing. Anyone who's progressing from an assistant agent, certificate of registration, to that Cert IV, that is what is seen as their CPD. So, they don't actually have any formalised CPD they need to complete. They need to be shown to either be completing the Cert IV and getting it done straight away, going to the Class 2, or as I mentioned before getting that minimum 3 units completed a year until that 4 year period.

So, that classes of CPD will be assistant agent or the certificate of registration holders. If you're a Class 2 agent, you now have to do 6 hours of CPD. Now, that's been broken into 2 components. You have three compulsory hours you need to complete and 3 elective hours you need to complete. And Fair Trading, you can only do those compulsory points through approved providers of CPD. Fair Trading is currently going through the application process at the moment to approve providers. So, there'll be a mixture of association bodies, people like us RTO, other bodies, other bodies who apply.

But, you have to go through the approval process and we have a curriculum we need to write, too. So, this year's compulsory areas are risk management, changes to the reforms and rules of conduct. Those are the compulsories so there's one hour for each, so that's your three compulsory. And, the electives pretty much they look like the old CPD. They're a mixture of things that are going to help you run about your job or whatever it is. You might need to do communication skills or whatever.

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Sasha Boe: So, that's for your Class 2. They have to do those annually. If you're a Class 1 agent, you'll have to do those Class 2 requirements plus an extra 3 hours around business. So, you might do financials or HR. You have to do 3 hours to cover that, but you won't need to worry about that until 2021. So, those Class 1 agents have got a little bit of time up their sleeve but those Class 2 agents, we're in that next phase now, so from now on, you guys will need to get your CPD completed, compulsory, electives.

Amanda Farmer: The other item I think worth mentioning is that I had read somewhere about a 6 month transition period for this legislation. I think, perhaps, because we are in this crazy time of the world at the moment. So, what does that mean in terms of compliance? What is this 6 month transition?

Sasha Boe: Yes, look, my understanding of the 6 months transition is it doesn't mean you can't be seen to be transitioning or going towards fulfilling the requirements. It doesn't mean you shouldn't be doing your CPD. You still need to be shown to be actually attempting to fulfill the requirements, but I think what you'll see is rather than being fined potentially if you haven't done something, it'll be an educative process. They'll say, "Hey, you need to get this done. I can see you haven't done whatever it might be."

That's not just around the training, I think that's around everything that sits under the new changes. So, more of an educative approach as opposed to a compliance slap on the wrist, more "Hey, you should be doing this." No fines at this stage.

I probably should mention there, too, as far as significant change around the Class 1 license is the supervisory guidelines. There always has been, but the new supervisory guidelines for a licensee-in-charge, they're quite robust. You need to be making sure you've got processes and procedures in place to fulfill the requirements of the supervisory guidelines, and that licensee-in-charge now, you are very responsible for everything that goes on in your workplace, as you always have been, but now there are some things that you have to make sure that you're doing. You're going to be responsible for making sure the staff are getting their CPD done.

You will get fined if they're not, if they're not transitioning to that Cert IV as assistant agents, all those things, but there are some new supervisory guidelines that came out February 2020, so jump on the Fair Trading website. Amanda will put a link on your site. They're there. They're pretty concise and you need to make sure you've got some policies and procedures that sit underneath the supervisory guidelines.

Amanda Farmer: And, a really good lead in there, Sasha, to the broader view that I wanted to discuss with you. What do you see the impact of these reforms being over the long term? It's sounding to me like we are increasing the standard of education, professionalism, perhaps. We're making very clear where the buck stops. Are we going to see higher fees charged by strata managers? Do you think this is a path to greater respect for this profession? What should be, in my view, a profession. How do you see this changing the future of strata management?

Sasha Boe: Look, in my personal opinion, as far as the strata side of things go with the property, I don't see huge changes. You guys have still got exactly the same qualification to get your Class 2. Yes, there's that diploma, which as I said before, and that experience component, I think that's fantastic. We're not just having people open businesses on a whim thinking, "Ah, there's money to be made in strata. Hey, I'm going to do that." There has to be a serious decision making around going down that pathway. That's great at the top end, but as far as Class 2, strata, your qualifications haven't changed. You still have to do the same thing to become a Class 2 or an agent.

I think the entry bar to get into the strata side of things, and that assistant agent, it's now 7 units. In my personal opinion, that's too high. Real estate has only got 5.

Amanda Farmer: Tell me what that equates to? At the moment, my understanding has been at the moment, or previous to the 23rd of March, it was something like a 3-day course that you could do to obtain your certificate of registration. What is it now to become an assistant agent?

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Sasha Boe: Yes, so it's 7 units so it's the same 3 that were always there, the 3 units that everyone would have undertaken prior to the 23rd, plus an extra four units. And, they center around customer service, quality, dealing with conflict. So, they're not bad skills to have. Probably the silver lining in it is those units actually carry across into that Certificate IV. ok, so in getting those 7 units done, you're getting 7 units of your Class 2 Cert IV completed. There's 18 units in that course, so you're getting 7 knocked over.

Sasha Boe: But, I still think as an entry level, we're talking about barriers to entry and the government always tries to keep those low so we can get people into the sector, I feel it's been lifted a little high. I was disappointed that the strata sector didn't push back harder to Fair Trading with the 7 units. Real estate got five, so why there's a difference, I just don't think the voice was loud enough. I think that people didn't understand enough about what the implications might be around that entry-level course. Again, you got to try to find the silver lining, you are getting knocked over 7 units towards that license, but-

Amanda Farmer: Yes, and you are being mandated that you do have to make that transition within 4 years.

Sasha Boe: Correct.

Amanda Farmer: Practically, how does the 7 units play out? Say for example, what are you providing for people who want to do that assistant agent course?

Sasha Boe: We got that online so people can access that. The course has been set up that people can do it in a crash course mode. They've got access to a tutor if they need it. We can run it face-to-face ... obviously, not at that moment, but if we need to, we can go in and run it in an organisation in the future. It basically sets someone up to understand who's who at the zoo, I guess, in a strata office, what's good customer service skills? Again, if you've done those sorts of things, you can probably get recognition for prior learning for some of those units.

We call them the softer skills around a course. They're not those hard core, legislative units around what is the legislation? It's more of a how you should operate personally in a strata environment. Yes, we have it. It's there. It's ready to roll, and again, you get recognition once you've done those towards getting that Class 2 Cert IV completed later.

Amanda Farmer: And, if someone signs up to do the online course, can they do that in a week? Do they do that at their own speed?

Sasha Boe: Well, as you mentioned before, it was about a 3 day face-to-face course, that 3 units previously. They can do it in their own time. We give them about 6 months to get it down. If you put your head down and you bottom up to get it down at home, giving it a good 7 and 1/2, 8 hour day, you probably get it done in about 7 to 8 days. It is a little chunkier, but again, if you've been working in customer service or hospitality and you come and you cross into the strata sector, we would definitely recognise the skills that you're bringing in that customer service environment dealing with conflict, and you would get some recognition, so that would cut down the amount of time you'd actually have to spend with your head down doing the course.

Amanda Farmer: Very interesting. ok, what is, Sasha, one ... If you can, cut it down to one ... key takeaway here for our strata managers listening? Having heard all of this, what do you suggest that their next step is?

Sasha Boe: Be aware of the changes. There's a lot of people who I don't think even know that they've happened. Get onto the Fair Trading website. It's got a lot of really useful information. They're starting to trim it down a bit from the old stuff, so poke about a bit and have a look at what your responsibilities are because at the end of the day, it is your responsibility to know what you are supposed to be doing. And look, that compulsory CPD this year is cracker, especially the units around the reforms and the changes, so even if you're an assistant agent, and you're supposed to be transitioning to that Cert IV and technically you don't need to be doing that compulsory CPD, even if you just do that one hour for your own professional development, it'll all be bundled in together and it'll just help you get your head around what you're supposed to be doing.

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Sasha Boe: But, that would be the take home. You need to know what you're supposed to be doing, so you need to get onto it.

Amanda Farmer: Excellent advice. Thank you, Sasha. You are always such a font of knowledge for all things regulatory. I refer to you often when there's changes in the law and we see each other at events and you say, "Amanda, I've got something new for you. You better be across this one." So, thank you for sharing all that with us.

Sasha Boe: My pleasure.

Amanda Farmer: How do our listeners find out more about you and Real Estate Training Solutions? And, please, anything else you want to add before we wrap up.

Sasha Boe: Yes look, you can find us at RETS, or RETS.com.au. Or, give us a call no obligation. 1-300-850-980. We are business as usual, so even in these crazy times, just give us a ring. And as I said, no obligation. Happy to help you work out what you're supposed to be doing. Yes, happy to help.

Amanda Farmer: Excellent, and I will make sure that all the important resources, all the links, are in the show notes under this episode over at YourStrataProperty.com.au/podcasts. Thanks again, Sasha. Have a good, safe, quiet week.

Sasha Boe: And you. Thanks, Amanda.

Outro: Thank you for listening to Your Strata Property, the podcast which consistently delivers to property owners reliable and accurate information about their strata property. You can access all the information below this episode by the show notes at www.yourstrataproperty.com.au. You can also ask questions in the comments section, which Amanda will answer in her upcoming episodes. How can Amanda help you today?