

Publication Date: 21 August 2025

YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

Listen to this podcast Episode [here](#).

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.

Amanda Farmer: Hello and welcome, I'm Amanda Farmer, and I have with me today in real life, in person, on the couch, right next to me, Reena Van Aalst from Strata Central. Hey, Reena.

Reena Van Aalst: It's so lovely to be with you, Amanda on the couch.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, we are back together in person. Loved our in-person chat so much last time, we booked a whole conference around an in-person podcast.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes.

Amanda Farmer: Not quite. No, we didn't. We are here together on the Gold Coast getting ready to attend Dr. Nicole Johnston's Strata Impact Conference 2025. We thought we'd squeeze in a podcast recording before everything kicks off tomorrow, and we are in the gorgeous Langham Hotel, where it's all happening. Beautiful afternoon and time to talk strata.

Reena Van Aalst: Trying to join the scenery at the same time too, Amanda.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, we are making some videos, so if you do want to check out Reena and I, on the couch looking at the view here on the beautiful east coast of Australia, jump on socials and check out those vids. But for now, our wins and challenges in strata. Let's start with your challenge this week, Reena Van Aalst. Hit me with it.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes, well, this actually happened at a meeting that one of my colleagues and I were attending. This strata scheme has to replace the roof membrane. There's been some leaks that have been occurring in some of the top-floor apartments, and as we're aware now with the Design and Building Practitioners Act, a design has to be undertaken by a registered practitioner, it has to be put onto the portal, and the property manager got an engineer to prepare all this.

We approved the fee proposal. They're just about to lodge the plans on the portal, and last time we had a strata committee member so meeting. Sorry, one of the members who is not really happy with rules and regulations and has said that obviously this **DBP Act has gone too far**, basically said that the quotes now that we've received are nearly triple what had been originally provided.

Amanda Farmer: I bet.

Reena Van Aalst: Now, the other side of community members were concerned that if the owners corporation proceeded down this path, where they are aware that it's actually not legal to have a person who's not registered just do the work. Now, the quotes that we'd received were obviously from some top-tier builders, which I think were probably a bit over the top, but nevertheless the price would be at least double. So this committee member said, "I have a contractor who's done work in the next door building, which we also manage so I'm aware of the contractor."

He doesn't have the design and building practitioners qualification, and he said that he can do it for half the price, but he can still give a warranty. So the members spent quite a lot of time deliberating over this aspect of it. And our advice was looking at the legislation just at the meeting on the run, was that if an owners corporation does something in contravention of the Act, then it's actually, I can't remember what the word was now, but there was something to the effect that someone can be prosecuted.

Members of the committee can be prosecuted. They refer to the word body corporate, as opposed to owners corporation. So the question, Amanda, is really, is that warranty worth the paper that it's written on, and what are the repercussions? The committee don't want to take that responsibility. "Let's take it to a general meeting," they said. "Let the owners decide whether or not they

Publication Date: 21 August 2025
YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

should be following the DBP Act.”

And I'm thinking, well, I don't really know if that's also a feasible suggestion, but it was just fortuitous that I was gonna meet with you today, and I thought I would raise this matter. Have you?

Amanda Farmer: Yes.

Reena Van Aalst: I didn't think that anyone could be protected by knowingly asking the owners, “Can you please not comply with the Act?” But I just thought it'd be good if we could get your thoughts on it.

Amanda Farmer: Well, look, here's my understanding. The Design and Building Practitioners Act requires building work to be done in a certain way by certain qualified people, to have certain certificates issued in order to comply with the law. That law being the Design and Building Practitioners Act. It is a law. It's kind of hurting my head thinking about how does this committee think that they can abridge the law.

Reena Van Aalst: Well, I mean, the committee doesn't want to do it, but it's one particular member who's saying, well, it's, you know, half the price. We'll get a warranty, and can we call it maintenance? You know, even though spending like nearly \$200,000. But anyway, I'm not sure.

Amanda Farmer: It's not so much about what you want to call the work, it's about whether the work fits into the category of work, building work, as it's defined under the Design and Building Practitioners Act.

And as we've talked about on the podcast before, I've chatted to Helen Kowal about this. Who in my books is the gun on this legislation? There's a definition of building work in the Act. If it requires development consent, if it's work that's affecting waterproofing and more than one dwelling, then it's going to be work in my understanding. Work that needs to be done pursuant to the Act.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes.

Amanda Farmer: So talking about warranties, I wonder if you're talking about homeowners warranty, so the builder being able to say, “Look, I can get homeowners warranty. So you're covered under the Home Building Act for defects.”

Reena Van Aalst: I think he was talking more about. I mean more, I can give you a warranty, which, whatever that warranty means, I think you mean in the consumer law type regime. But I'm not really sure if someone who doesn't have a qualification can even give a warranty, even though they work, maybe using this high-level product that's top end product for waterproofing and whatever. But..

Amanda Farmer: Yes, well then, isn't that a separate issue if he can't give you homeowners warranty insurance?

Reena Van Aalst: No, he can give that, I think, but that's separate. But it's more about, you know, why should we pay a design practitioner when we will still get a warranty, whatever that warranty means. I think he means like, you know, the consumer warranty that people get when work is done, not the home building compensation fund, which only kicks in if someone goes broke. But it's more about the warranty.

Amanda Farmer: Right, a statutory warranty under the Building Act because you'll have the contract.

Reena Van Aalst: One of the considerations I was thinking about, Amanda, was if they say there's, you know, like storm damage and then water comes through. But we would have to disclose when you're doing works of this quantum to the insurance company, and I'm sure that they would think, “Well, hang on.” I mean they normally ask you for copies of reports and things that you've done.

Publication Date: 21 August 2025
YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

So I don't even think that that would necessarily fly if there was any water leaks as a result of work that was done further to this type of thing.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, and not only the building insurer having a problem with this. Again, I keep going back to the homeowners warranty insurance because that's something that this contractor would understand that they need to have that might not even respond where the work hasn't been done in accordance with the DBPA.

And as for going to owners and saying, "Well, let's put it to a general meeting," and if all the owners say they want to do it because it's cheaper, then were okay. No. The committee, and that committee member in particular is not okay because I imagine they've received advice from you in your capacity as a strata manager saying, "This is work that falls within this category. We need to have a design practitioner."

They are ignoring that advice. They have a duty to act in the best interest of the owners. They have a duty to act in good faith. They are not acting in good faith. If they then go to the owners in meeting and say, "This is legally possible," when you've told them it's not, and you might even tell them, thinking about making sure that you're covered, tell them to go and get legal advice on this point.

So, this question you're asking me today, "Amanda, can we do it?" My answer is no, I don't think you can do it.

Reena Van Aalst: I don't think so either.

Amanda Farmer: But to have an actual legal advice on that point..

Reena Van Aalst: Would be the best thing.

Amanda Farmer: would be the best thing. And if they don't want to spend money on that legal advice, at least you've told them, and there's a record of you telling them.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes.

Amanda Farmer: Let us know how that one pans out, Reena. But I know there are other managers out there who are struggling with this because, yes, the costs are three, four times as much. I've been through it in one of my own buildings. Waterproof membrane. Exactly the situation. \$2 million. \$2 million job. Yes, a few balconies were done as well. But having to explain to owners that it is because of this legislation that we have to jump through these hoops.

We need these engineers who are appropriately qualified, and it makes it - having to do the drawings that they have to do, having to get it all registered, it does make it more.

Reena Van Aalst: But I think what I'd want to explain to them also last night is that we've got buildings that have spent a lot of money five, six years ago that are now having to redo the same balconies again.

Because at that time, there wasn't this legislation that gave protection. So now, the owners are now on personal accountability of these practitioners, which wasn't the case previously. And therefore, there is some more certainty. And I said this all came out of, you know, all these buildings with Ascot Towers and all these other things where.. And most of the buildings that we know when they have defects relate to waterproofing and water ingress.

So we can see the intent, perhaps the extension to just normal apartment workers now becomes onerous and expensive. But I think long term, we've spent a lot of money in many buildings, and we're having to spend it all over again.

Publication Date: 21 August 2025

YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

Amanda Farmer: Yes, good point, Good point. And thank you for saying that. That's true. That's been my experience in the building I'm thinking of these are balconies that were done exactly four or five years ago, and they are having to be done again. And hopefully now we'll be right for a while. Fingers crossed. We'll see.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes, we'll see.

Amanda Farmer: Well, thank you for bringing that challenge to the pod. My challenge for this week comes from a strata manager member inside our community who has asked me this question. It's not the first time I've asked, and I said, "Well, great timing. I'm recording a podcast with Reena very shortly," and I'm going to put her on the spot and ask her how she handles this one.

It is about the auditing of trust accounts. Now, I have heard this before. It's not the first time I've been asked the question. I think I know the answer, but I'm interested in what you think. The Property Stock and Agents Act requires real estate professionals who operate a trust account, and that is a trust account as defined under the Property Stock and Agents Act, to have that trust account audited each year and to report the results of that audit to New South Wales Fair Trading.

Now, strata managers manage a lot of trust accounts because you operate trust accounts for each of your clients. Is that a trust account within the meaning of the Property Stock and Agents Act? And do you have to, in addition to your buildings that have a Strata Schemes Management Act requirement to do an audit, do you as a strata manager also have to do an audit and report those results separately? To Fair Trading.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes, we do actually, Amanda. And that's due each year, 30 September, and that's only done by an auditor. So we have a separate auditor that will go through every single one of our trust accounts. So what we do prepare a spreadsheet of our balances as at the end of 30th of June, and then we also have all the bank statements of every single building and we have to report any times when our trust account's been overdrawn for any reason, which obviously should never happen unless there's a loan and there's not enough money in the account.

But I think now a lot of our banks are aware of this requirement and they stop that occurring. We also get reports every week from StrataCash telling us what buildings are in the red, like, and they actually highlight them in red so that we can see where their expenses are greater than the cash at bank in terms of their. So we know which buildings are low on funds, which is a good thing that we have with StrataCash and the StrataMax providers that we use, which is a great tool for us as managers, but each year we have to lodge that.

So any term deposits that we have, as at 30th June, have to also be included in that list. And that's normally lodged by our auditor. He will lodge the audit with Fair Trading and sign off that they've audited our trust account and whether or not there's any breaches or not.

Amanda Farmer: And is this something that you've received direct advice or guidance from Fair Trading, or maybe from SCA or somebody saying that you have to do this? Because I have to say, on my reading of the legislation, I'm not sure that you are operating the kind of trust account that the legislation is talking about, because it's not a trust account that's in your name as the company, as the agency operating the trust account. Your trust accounts are in the name of your clients, right?

Reena Van Aalst: Yes, that's right.

Amanda Farmer: And you operated as trustee.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes, it's Strata Central as trustee for SP, whatever, whatever.

Amanda Farmer: Yes.

Publication Date: 21 August 2025
YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

Reena Van Aalst: So the thing is, as far as we're aware, and Fair Trading have emailed that we do have to lodge this report, and I think it's a good thing, even if it's not required, because I think that strata managers would hold a lot more money than real estate agents ever would. Because if you think about, I mean, they would hold money for deposits when there's a sale.

That's very transient, holding millions of dollars all the time. If you collectively add the amount of money that we've got in trust.

Amanda Farmer: But this is the thing - are you holding it, or is the owners corporation holding it? And then there's a separate obligation for an owners corporation to have their trust account audited if it's over a certain amount.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes. So that's a separate requirement, but I think that this is an order, as at 30 June. So whereas, as you know, financial year ends of buildings, Amanda will differ across the scheme based on that they were registered. Whereas this requirements, as at 30 June, how much money do you have in your trust account for each of the strata schemes, BMCs, any entity that you manage. I think we've included company title schemes as everything that we're managing, not just strata schemes.

And then the auditor will say, "Are there any breaches or not in terms of the trust account, and that is reported to Fair Trading." So as far as I'm aware, and I haven't really, like, looked into it as deeply as you're asking me, because I think I've always assumed it was a requirement, otherwise you wouldn't have to do it.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, interesting. So some managers were telling me, yes, they were doing it.

Some said they'd missed the last couple of years because they'd heard somewhere they didn't have to do it, and they never heard from Fair Trading about it. So I said, "Well, you might now because I think Fair Trading is on the warpath a bit with our strata managers checking up on things." And then I went and had a look at the legislation, and I thought, "I'm not sure that you have to do it."

So good to have your view and to hear that you're doing it. I would love to hear from other strata managers out there whether you've thought about this, whether you do this. What your view is? And subject to those views. I'd be happy to have a bit more of a dig into that Property, Stock and Agents Act. And, you know, I was looking at the definition of the trust account, I think what I was looking at, and how you fall into that category of having to get it audited.

Reena Van Aalst: Well, maybe they're probably not being followed up because it's not required. I mean, it's an interesting thing. I mean, first time I've..

Amanda Farmer: Yes.

Reena Van Aalst: It's good to know.

Amanda Farmer: But you can't go wrong, right? Having someone double-check.

Reena Van Aalst: No, I think it means that every single billing, whether they're audited or not. And I think we only have a couple that don't get audited, but 99% do. So. But it's good to have that extra oversight, as at 30 June, is everything correct, and et cetera..

Amanda Farmer: So, yes, awesome. How about a win for this week?

Reena Van Aalst: So, Amanda, my win for this week was the fact that I had to be asked to be on a panel a few hours before our REI Strata Sundowner event. Obviously, I'm the deputy chairperson and Ben Cabello, who was supposed to be on the panel, was unfortunately unwell. So I was asked to be on the panel, and we were talking about the recent reforms in strata.

Publication Date: 21 August 2025

YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

So I just wanted to sort of thank the whole REI team for a really great event. We had a number of representatives there, including Fair Trading, I understand, were also there. And it was a funny sort of comment that was made by the Fair Trading representative because they were giving out some champagne, it was worth more than \$60, and, and then the person apparently said to one of my colleagues that's on our subcommittee, "Oh, you need to declare that."

It's like, no, you don't need to declare something that is from a professional body that's just doing a bit of a lucky door prize, you know.

Amanda Farmer: Yes.

Reena Van Aalst: But we had the REI, New South Wales President, Tom McGlynn, we had Pete Matthews, myself, Kate McHugh, who's doing the Strata Futures Initiative, and David Glover, who's the Managing Director of OCN.

Amanda Farmer: Nice.

Reena Van Aalst: So it's quite a good event, and it was interesting to see all different people from different parts of strata all coming together, and it was a great event. So hopefully some more managers may want to join the REI, and it's actually doing a great job in terms of advocating for strata managers with the recent reforms. There was a strata toolkit that was issued so we could actually share things with our members.

It had things high level for managers, but also other tools that we could share with our owners and committee members. So, yes, so just a shout out there for REI, who's doing a great job.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, excellent. I did see the REI reps also at the Fair Trading, Strata Leaders Forum, which was..

Reena Van Aalst: On 20 of July.

Amanda Farmer: Yes, A couple of weeks ago. So they are definitely doing a lot more in the strata space and trying to put a bit more focus on their strata manager members. I have shared a bit of my content with them and chatted to them about some strata training.

So they're definitely getting on the front foot there, which is great to give our managers as many options as possible to get educated, to do their CPD, to get information and to network and socialise at events like that Strata Sundowner.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes. And I think something that did come out of it was basically perhaps at the different chapters that REI has, which is the property managers and sales making sure perhaps there's a bit of a strata update, because a lot of property managers don't really know what common property is and sometimes we're talking about sales agents saying, "Oh, this is a great building because the levies are low," which really, depending on how much is in the bank, may not be a good thing.

So I think having that sort of cross-referencing across the different chapters, the buyer's agents, the sales, the property managers, it's actually a good way to try and improve the sector as a whole.

Amanda Farmer: Yes. And when that position of Property and Strata Services Commissioner first came to be a few years ago, and we're all talking about, "Oh, well, we thought we were going to get a strata commissioner. We want a strata commissioner. We want someone dedicated to strata." And the government spokespeople at the time, including the strata commissioner at the time, would say, No. It's important that we approach this as a sector-wide, property-sector-wide issue. Strata is not standalone.

It's important that we don't have real estate agents, property managers, strata managers in silos. The work that they do overlaps, and they each need to understand what the other does. And I think I see that now coming through in what Fair Trading and the

Publication Date: 21 August 2025

YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

Property and Strata Commissioner's office is doing, attending these different events, talking to different property services professionals and getting a real feel for the property sector as a whole.

So, yes, I do see a lot of benefits there. Yes. So good on you. I'm glad that they invited you, Reena, to be on the panel to represent. My win for this week comes from one of the clients in my legal practice. I had to step back the other day and think to myself, how many exactly clients do I have at the moment that I'm running damages claims for? And it's a lot, I gotta say. For me, it's a lot relative to the other work that I might be doing in my legal practice.

I think the majority of the, if not all, of the NCAT cases I have at the moment are lot owners who are seeking that work be done on the common property that is or has caused them loss, lost rent, temporary accommodation costs, damage to their property. And these complaints, these issues, have been dragging out for years. And they have finally reached the stage where they've decided they've got to take action, they have to go to the Tribunal and seek orders, and they have to spend money on a lawyer like me to help them do that.

And I think I've got about five or six of them running at the moment. And if I add up the amounts that they're claiming, we're getting close to, if not over million dollars in the total amounts that these owners are claiming. And to recognise that for me is disheartening. It is a symptom of a system that has been broken for a long time, I think. And it's very easy to get distracted by those feelings of this is broken, this is wrong, this is not getting any better.

And to forget the good work that has been done to build our buildings better, as you say, to better repair our buildings when they're not operating as they should, common property is not functioning as it should. And the work that we're now seeing came through in our reforms to our legislation. Fair trading is out there. They are being very loud about these changes about increased obligations on owners corporations to properly repair and maintain, that they are about to their new powers to come in and inspect, to issue compliance notices, to seek undertakings.

Those powers are about to start, and you can see everything kind of warming up towards that. So I think there's a lot of good stuff happening that we're going to see the flow through. And perhaps lawyers like me won't have as many of these claims to be running in the future. But that's just a little bit by way of aside. I'm raising this because one of the clients in my legal practice has one of these hundreds of thousands of dollar claims. And this claim comes from that awful situation where there was a burst sewer pipe and it burst.

She's in a villa-style setup. It burst in the courtyard; it flooded her courtyard. It then this is sewage. Then went into her kitchen, and it was never dealt with by the owner's corporation. It was cleaned up on a temporary basis. And the owners corporation or the committee at the time was not responsive to my client's claims to say, "Hang on, you know, this needs to be properly hygienically dealt with. It needs to be sanitised. The flooring in the kitchen now needs to come up. The kitchen cabinets need to be dealt with."

And my client eventually went to the insurer, the owners corporation's insurer directly, because the owners corporation wouldn't do it and then got the runaround from the insurer for a whole host of reasons that I won't get into. But we're now talking two years down the track, and she thankfully got some legal advice first from somebody else and then came to me. We ended up commencing NCAT proceedings, and just last week she's received, hasn't resolved yet, so I can't give you too many details, but she has received an offer from the insurer, which is close to \$300,000.

Reena Van Aalst: Oh, geez.

Amanda Farmer: Yes. And this is the point where insurers, hard to have sympathy for insurers. I've got - I know I'm not going to put that out there, but at the end of the day, the insurers are picking up these huge bills because of owners corporations that have just had their heads in the sand.

Reena Van Aalst: But can I ask you, Amanda, because in terms of obviously this was an insurable event. So otherwise I don't

Publication Date: 21 August 2025

YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

think the insurer would have just be ultimately paying out the claim. But, so I think the problem, I think that's happening in many of our buildings, is that you've got aging buildings that for many years have not raised enough levies. This is a systemic thing across, you know, if you look at buildings and how much levies they've been raising, you know, oh, we kept our levies the same, which means you're going backwards.

But anyway, that's even seemed to be a thing never going up. And buildings that have gone up by 5% every year, or 3 to 5%, you don't have this problem. But these buildings that don't want to raise money, aging buildings, don't want to spend the money, then you've got new buildings that have defects. So you've got, I think, owners. I think whether it's old or new, you've got to start putting money into buildings.

And I think this was raised, I think, by Paul Morton at one of the conferences that I went to, where owners are investors. They're not consumers. This is a thing like, you know, you're an investor, it's an asset. And I think sometimes people don't want to spend the money. And this is a problem that lot owners then have a force them to, you know, two years. Why should someone have this problem for two years?

It's really unacceptable that someone has to put up with this type of behavior in terms of committees, not wanting to spend money, not wanting to comply with the law. And unfortunately, it's only going to get worse as time goes on with aging buildings, Amanda. And yes, and I said, if you look at how much you got in the capital fund divided by the number of people, you know, it's \$500 each. I mean, I'm sure you'd have more in the bank yourself than that. And also, if something happens in your own life that wouldn't even pay for two flat tires, I mean.

Amanda Farmer: Yes.

Reena Van Aalst: So it's like, you know, I'm not saying that everyone's swimming in cash, nor should people be, but I'm saying that you've got to look at the building in the same way as you look at your own life in terms of, do we have enough money to pay bills?

Amanda Farmer: Yes. Instead of thinking, how can we save money here?

Reena Van Aalst: Yes. And how can we do things in a way that doesn't comply with the law?

Amanda Farmer: Exactly. We'll come full..

Reena Van Aalst: Yes. Go back to the beginning.

Amanda Farmer: Yes. Look, I hope you're taking the air out of my balloon a little bit here, because I hope I'm really trying to. You know, I have a reputation for being the positive one, right? I have a reputation for, "Amanda, you make strata fun. Amanda, you put a smile on my face. Amanda, it doesn't seem to matter what happens, you know, you just keep, keep going."

And yes, I do, and I do feel like that, but it's hard. It's hard sometimes. And I do feel the compassion fatigue setting in.

Reena Van Aalst: Yes.

Amanda Farmer: Particularly when I have a couple of handfuls of clients at the moment, all going through the same thing. They shouldn't be. Most of them are women, some of them are single women, some of them have divorced and then bought this beautiful-looking strata unit, thinking, "This is now going to be my sanctuary." Only in a couple of weeks time for the roof to start leaking and then to unco that the vendor hid the reports that said the place was leaking like a sieve.

I mean, just heartbreaking not able to live there, having to move out with their kids, rent somewhere else and not realising until they

Publication Date: 21 August 2025

YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

come to somebody like me that they can claim that and should be claiming that money from their owners corporation, who also, as I keep saying, "Put their head in the sand."

Reena Van Aalst: But the problem is also that person, Amanda, too, because next year the premium will go up as a result of this claim. That person will be targeted. And like, we've got some claims in one of our buildings, three claims actually. They were quite significant, not 300,000, but anyway. And the insurance premium's gone up by 48% and you know, the people that are responsible are going to be targeted.

I've seen it happen a lot where people are blamed. You know, "It's all because of this person that now we're paying this extra amount in insurance," rather than saying, "Well, maybe if you did it at the beginning and that person didn't have to go to the insurance and it wouldn't have been such a problem if there was perhaps quickly dealt with at the time. The cost could have been..".

Amanda Farmer: Absolutely, yes. Particularly this example now that is looking like we're about to settle. That is something that should have been cleaned up quickly. Then the kitchen cabinets wouldn't have ended up in the situation they're in. The tenants wouldn't have had to move out, the contents wouldn't have been damaged to the level that they've been damaged.

Reena Van Aalst: Exactly.

Amanda Farmer: I mean, it's all because it's been sitting there and been ignored. So yes, I agree, we do have that problem. I am hopeful with the more intense focus, and I think we have to agree on that - there has been a more intense focus on this issue in strata, the creation of the position of Property and Strata Services Commissioner. The task force that has now been put together by Fair Trading.

This new legislation that allows owners, instead of having to go to expensive lawyers, to be able to go to Fair Trading and make a report, make a complaint to Fair Trading about the lack of repair and maintenance and have an investigation in the same way that the building commissioner. The same powers that the building commissioner had, Fair Trading will now have those powers.

Reena Van Aalst: And also, Amanda, the extension from two years to six years for damages.

Amanda Farmer: Yes.

Reena Van Aalst: That's another example of the net being increased in terms of capturing people that perhaps didn't put their claims in that short time frame, to reflect other statutory time periods being six years for most things in our common law provisions.

Amanda Farmer: Yes. So I think we're doing what we can do. Whether it's enough or not remains to be seen.

Reena Van Aalst: Sure. Hopefully. I think it's moving in the right direction, Amanda, as you said.

Amanda Farmer: Well, thank you, Reena, for taking the time to sit on the couch with me yet again. We don't meet in person for nine years, and then we're twice in what has it been..

Reena Van Aalst: Two months?

Amanda Farmer: Two months, yes.

Reena Van Aalst: That's such a lovely thing.

Amanda Farmer: Go and enjoy the conference tomorrow. I will see you there.

Publication Date: 21 August 2025
YSP Podcast Transcript: 460 - Voting to ignore the DBPA | trust audits | an insurance win

Reena Van Aalst: Yes.

Amanda Farmer: And, looking forward to bringing some of those highlights, perhaps to our next chat.

Reena Van Aalst: Sounds great, Amanda.

Amanda Farmer: Let's do it. See you then.

Reena Van Aalst: Bye.

Amanda Farmer: Bye.

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 via the show notes at yourstrataproperty.com.au.