

**Supplementary
Submission
No 54a**

**INQUIRY INTO REGULATION OF BUILDING
STANDARDS, BUILDING QUALITY AND BUILDING
DISPUTES**

Name: Mr Peter Hopper and Ms Sharon Lambert

Date Received: 26 July 2019

**Legislative Council
Public Accountability Committee
Inquiry Into the Regulation of Building Standards, Building Quality
and Building Disputes**

26 July 2019

Dear Committee,

Further to our previous submission please find 'Part B' below which briefly describes our most recent experience amongst a long list of inappropriate activities undertaken by our building's management to avoid installing legally-required safety handrails on our building's balcony glass structural balustrades.

This latest chapter in the 12 year saga sums up the current situation. It also provides an insight into how building management will try (and all-to-often succeed in) getting away with something that it should not.

Unlicensed

Our building has just undergone extensive structural repair works on its balcony glass structural balustrades. The works should have been undertaken by a qualified builder or engineer, who would have been required to install the mandatory "interlinking handrails" (safety handrails specified by Australian Standard AS1288-2006 referenced by the Building Code of Australia BCA). But instead the works were done by a carpenter/joiner, misrepresented as a "builder".

How?

Although unlicensed to do so, the carpenter/joiner was allowed to undertake the extensive structural works. The works were invoiced as multiple items to keep any one item below \$5000 - even though the total project cost was more than \$35,000. In doing so the spend limit imposed by the Owners Corporation (\$20,000 per project) was flouted, no Fair Trading required contract with 'Home Building' insurance was entered

into, and installation of the required safety handrails was (yet again) illegally ignored.

Widespread

This is not an isolated / one-off incident, but rather the latest in a long list of inappropriate activities undertaken to avoid installing legally-required safety handrails on our building's balcony glass structural balustrades.

We have fully documented our experience to-date (which involves far more 'intrigue' than is described above!), are in the process of producing a comprehensive Case Study of the ordeal, and would be happy to discuss the situation with the Committee.

We hope our experience dealing with the situation described previously and above will help you formulate recommendations to solve at least some of the inherent problems preventing effective regulation of the building industry in NSW / Australia.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Hopper, BE (Hons) (UTS/NSWIT) & Sharon Lambert CPA