

# The Aurora

# TOWER



## **Word from the Chair**

Welcome to the first Aurora Tower Owners Newsletter for 2022. I am looking forward to a year that is not like last year! In this edition we report on several projects we are working on and give you an insight into some of the issues we are addressing.

We have experienced challenging times and more than ever we need to be neighbourly, helpful and respectful. There are two areas I would like to touch on.

### **Response to the COVID pandemic**

First is our response to the COVID pandemic. The Body Corporate Committee has been very clear that we will, as obliged, follow all instructions and mandates from the QLD government. The most significant and obvious is the wearing of masks. Masks are mandatory apart from a very small group of people who are exempt – and these people have been advised to wear face shields.

The Body Corporate Committee expects all tenants, owners, residents, contractors and visitors to comply. We continue to reiterate to our Caretaker the importance of their role in improving compliance with these mandates. Nevertheless, we have seen a number of conflicts between people wearing masks who rightly do not want unmasked people enter lifts with them. Please be clear, you must wear a mask, and if for some reason you are not, you need to respect your neighbour and not enter the lift.

### **Rubbish management**

I also would like to touch on the management of rubbish. Managing cleaning and rubbish is part of the Caretaking agreement, but anything that is specialist or unusual is passed on to the Body Corporate – that is all of us. This festive season, a Christmas tree sent down the garbage chute cost all of us \$800 for an out

of hours call out. A carpet steam clean out of cycle (carpets are steam cleaned every 6 months) costs around \$195 per floor, and this is specialist and is passed on to the Body Corporate – that is all of us. The Committee has a policy of passing on costs to those who create them, and to do that, we need timely reporting. I urge everyone to report all cleaning and maintenance issues before they turn into something that is more serious and costs us all much more.

Finally, we hope you are finding these more frequent newsletters and Owners Meetings helpful. Our next will be an Orientation for New Owners which is described later in this Newsletter. As you know our objective is to create a wonderful place in Brisbane to live and invest in – communication is a very big part of this, so if you have any comments or feedback, we would be very pleased to hear it.

**Phil Conwell**

Chairman, Aurora Tower Body Corporate



## **Treasurer update**

### **Budget Preparation**

A new sinking fund forecast is to be prepared for the new financial year which commences on 1 March. This forecast will be used as part of this year's budget considerations.

As part of the budgetary process, we will prioritise a list of expenditure items to be included. We would be delighted to hear from you if there are any maintenance or improvement issues that you feel should be included in our review.

Please email [treasurer@theauroratower.com.au](mailto:treasurer@theauroratower.com.au) to advise of any items for consideration for inclusion in the budget.

### **Urban Utilities (UU) Billing Changes**

UU are deliberating about the changeover of their billing practice from the Body Corporate to individual owners. We need UU to confirm their intended actions so that we can ensure owners are fairly treated.

We will send out an update to owners via email by the end of January (or sooner if we get the information).

**Jan Brewer**

Treasurer, Aurora Tower Body Corporate



## **Did you know?**

### ***Fostering a culture of gratitude***

Aurora Tower is a residential tower and a community. Our words and actions toward each other create the culture within this community. We want this to be a great place to live with everyone helping each other.

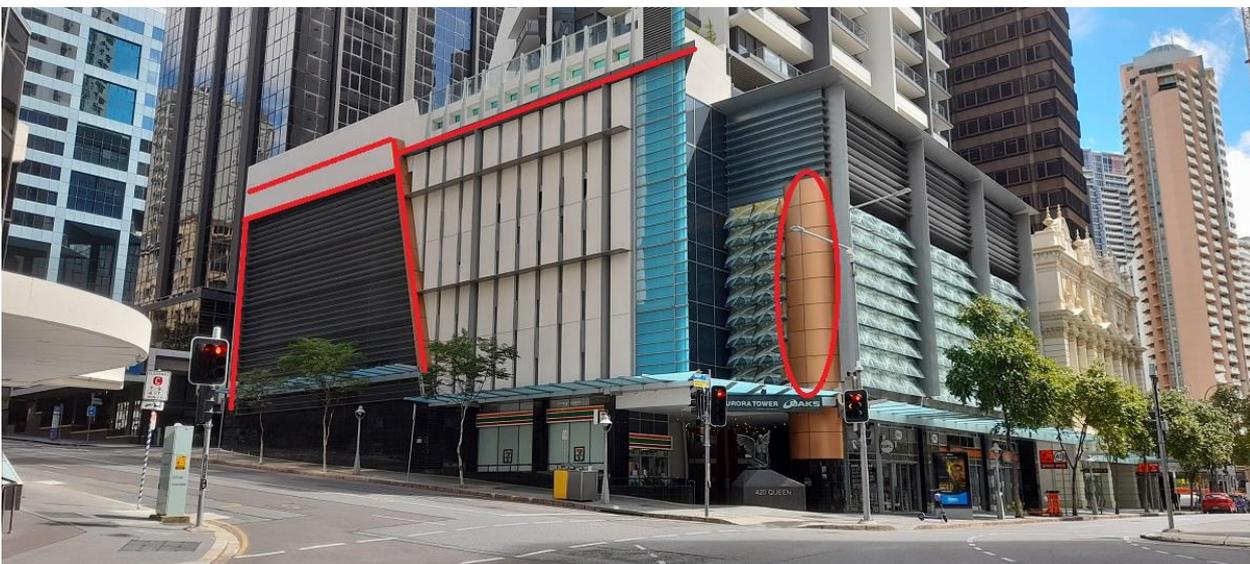
One step we are taking to foster a culture of gratitude is to create a 'Thanks' form on our web site. Through this form you can provide positive feedback to a person in the Aurora Tower (staff or resident) when they have been extraordinarily helpful to you or to the community.

The link to the 'Thanks' form is <https://www.theauroratower.com.au/thanks/>. We encourage its generous use (particularly as we have so many complaint forms.)

## Project Reports

### Flammable Cladding

Replacement of the flammable cladding on the lower levels at Aurora by Gold Coast Building Services, the contractor engaged to undertake this work, has been delayed due to the wet weather, and more recently to staff being affected by COVID. The latest update from them is they hope to finish in early February. Aside from minor work in Queen/Wharf Streets and Rich Lane, the largest outstanding area is above the awning in Wharf Street. Work in this area will be at night and will start in late January.



### Review of Key Security and Replacement

The security of keys has been an issue for some time and was one of the issues dealt with at the Caretaker Review in 2021. During the latter part of 2021, all materials related to this matter were reviewed, a report was produced and the Committee determined the path forward. The underlying principles behind this plan are:

- The management of the system is just as important as the key system itself.
- Expenditure of between \$250,000 and \$900,000 for an electronic key upgrade is not feasible with other demands on the sinking fund (such as lift upgrade)
- Improved policies and procedures around access to keys is required and adherence to these arrangements need to improve.
- Master keys should be available from a secured site with effective (possibly electronic) access only.
- Implementation will be phased, addressing the concerns of residents who have continued to report unauthorized access.

With businesses coming online again after the end of year slow down, we will shortly be commencing this key replacement project which will include drawing up specifications, finalizing the project budget, tendering for key replacement, planning lock changeover and key provision.

## Air Conditioning System Update

In 2015, minor leaks were identified in a number of Victaulic couplings in the circulating water system for the air conditioning. The cause was confirmed as microbial induced corrosion and specialists were engaged to determine appropriate corrective action. During outages in 2020 and 2021, several suspect Victaulic couplings were replaced. These were replaced with stainless steel. The method of water treatment was also reviewed and a more effective strategy was implemented.

Unfortunately, one of the couplings which was replaced in 2020 has begun to leak. The leak is intermittent and stops after 10-15 minutes. The water can be contained but the leak is a concern.

The project manager and supplier have inspected the coupling and, without opening the coupling, cannot identify the cause. As this would require an outage lasting several days (drain, open, inspect and refill), we intend living with the occasional leak until the system can be shut down in the cooler months. In the meantime, all necessary spares and services are being organized and regular monitoring is occurring. Should an emergency shutdown be required, the committee will advise all owners and residents as quickly as possible.

This is a very disappointing situation as it was hoped that 2020 was the last time this system would need to be shutdown.





## **HOT TOPICS AND UPDATES**

### **COVID-19 Wave Peak in Queensland**

As our Chairman indicated, we have experienced challenging times during the COVID pandemic and more than ever, we need to be neighbourly, helpful and respectful.

Omicron was first reported in South Africa on 24 November 2021. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Omicron to be a COVID-19 variant of concern, based on preliminary evidence that it spreads rapidly. This highly infectious variant has quickly spread across the world and has ripped through Australia since first it was identified on our shores in December, setting new records for daily case numbers across the country.

The severity associated with Omicron is still unknown, but early reports indicate it is a mild disease, at least in the younger population. Experts around the world are monitoring it closely to see if it is more likely to lead to severe illness compared to earlier variants.

The Body Corporate Committee has been very clear that we will, as obliged, follow all instructions and mandates from the QLD Government. The most significant and obvious is the wearing of masks.

***Masks are mandatory apart from a very small group of people who are exempt – and these people have been advised to wear face shields. The Body Corporate Committee expects all tenants, owners, residents, contractors, and visitors to comply.***

We have seen a number of conflicts between people wearing masks who rightly do not want unmasked people entering lifts with them. Please be clear, you must wear a mask, and if for some reason you are not, you need to respect your neighbour and not enter the lift.

Practise basic hygiene because it all makes a difference and you will probably be exposed – the question is, can you modify that exposure so that you turn it from an infecting dose into one that isn't infectious for you?

***We can protect ourselves by doing everything we know – wear your mask indoors and wear them properly, think about when you go out and always have your mask handy. Wash your hands regularly and practise social distancing.***

We are all in this together!



## Upcoming Events

### New Owners Orientation Session

**February 19, 2pm**

**Function Room, Level 7, Aurora Tower**

This is a new initiative, part of the Committee's endeavors to enhance communication with owners. Owners who have purchased their properties since June 2021 have been invited and for those unable to attend, the presentation slides will be available on the website and if interest is shown, a remote session may be conducted.

Amongst other topics, the session will cover:

- the roles of the Committee, EBCM and the Caretaker
- where you can find information about the building
- how you can report issues
- the priorities for expenditure of the sinking fund

If you have not received your invitation, it may be that we do not have an email address for you, if that is the case, please arrange this with EBCM and contact Phil Conwell, Chairperson at [chairperson@theauroratawer.com.au](mailto:chairperson@theauroratawer.com.au) to register for the session.

### Owners Social Meet & Greet

**February 19, 3pm**

**Function Room, Level 7, Aurora Tower**

This event (BYO) will follow the New Owners Orientation Session for any other Owners who would like to meet their new co-investors and neighbours.

## How to contact the Committee

- Secretary (*Russell Christie*)
- Building Manager (*Mark Fogarty*)
- Facilities Manager (*Chris Brown*)
- Ernst (EBCM) (*Gary Willis*)

[secretary@theauroratower.com.au](mailto:secretary@theauroratower.com.au)  
[HMAurora@theoaksgroup.com.au](mailto:HMAurora@theoaksgroup.com.au)  
[MaintAurora@theoaksgroup.com.au](mailto:MaintAurora@theoaksgroup.com.au)  
[gwillis@ebcm.com.au](mailto:gwillis@ebcm.com.au)

## Your Committee

Phil Conwell - Chair

Russell Christie - Secretary

Jan Brewer - Treasurer

Bronwyn Dredge

Tracy Stanley

Luis Valle

Greg Firth



## Aurora Tower Newsletter

This newsletter is sent via *email*. Owners who haven't provided an email address to EBCM will find a copy posted on the Aurora Tower website.

The Committee encourages the use of email as it facilitates timely communication and helps to save money for all owners