

From: [Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector POV eSubmission Form](#)
To: [LSIC](#)
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector
Date: Thursday, 23 June 2016 2:31:53 PM

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector

Mr Geoffrey Douglas
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I am a resident and leaseholder of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (registered as a caravan park) as above address. Owners and Managers of Caravan Parks should be a fit and proper person. They should have extensive training in owning and operating caravan parks including police checks and working with children checks.

The current owner who is also managing the Park purchased the park as an investment site unseen at an auction. Paying \$2.9 Million to \$3.0 million at this time our Park Fees went from \$842.00 per quarter to \$1404.00 per quarter. This fee increase was to ensure the owner received his 10% return on investment. It should be noted that the sites of the park are leased on a 99 year lease agreement with leases paid upfront. Collectively the lease holders have a significant investment in this park to the value of approx \$16 million. The lease holders are not receiving value for their agreement.

There should be controls in place to manage fee increases to a level that can be affordable to pensioners. Pensions only rise by C.P.I., we have just received notification that our fees will rise by a further 6.4% on July 1st. 2016.

Unfortunately this owner/manager over the last 3 years has displayed no ability or willingness to learn how to handle any issues with residents and leaseholders. In addition the park is seriously lacking appropriate repairs, maintenance and cleaning. It is important that legislation be introduced to prevent unsuitable people owning and managing caravan parks. The park is ill managed. It is currently on its third assistant managers this year, the first in February lasted around 4 days leaving with irreconcilable differences with the owner/manager. The second in April/May lasting about 21 days also left with irreconcilable differences with management. This lack of proper and consistent staffing has been a serious problem as on more than one occasion ambulances have not been able to gain entry to the park to attend seriously ill residents (one a stroke).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All Parks should have the same entry code (for all emergency services) to gain access to park. currently each park has their own code causing problems for emergency services.
2. Develop a clear statement to provide security of tenure instead of selling 99 year leases. This seems an overkill plus a way of owners making a lot of money.

3. Training course established. People should not be permitted to own or manage a park until they have successfully complete a coarse. This to include Police checks and working with children checks.
4. Restrictions should be placed on fee increases as stated earlier, fees have escalated way beyond C.P.I, this continues to put pressure on tenants who live off the pension.
5. Park should be adequately managed to provide 24 hours coverage to handle any emergency.
6. Park inspections should be conducted regularly to ensure compliance to regulations. This should include proper servicing/maintenance, health regulations - cleaning amenities blocks, BBQ's. Currently managements attitude is toilet blocks weekly cleaned and BBQ's monthly cleaning. These inspections should be conducted unannounced.
7. Appointment of an Ombudsman. This should simplify and speed up dispute resolutions. The current system through VCAT is too long and costly for people without financial resources.
8. Park management should be made to attend Resident Committee meetings. Currently the owner/manager does not or will not attend these meetings.
9. Authority be given back to Council to control and regulate the issue of permits and construction standards of relocatable homes. Currently this is left to the owner/manager of the park to control. This has lead to many disputes in this park. The current owner/manager has no knowledge in this area to manage properly.
10. Recommend that a review date be set, suggest in three years time to analyse the effectiveness of the new legislation.

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File1:

File2:

File3: