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## Media Release – **INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE**

Friday 22 December 2017

Attention National Media

### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN APARTMENT OWNERS URGED TO TIGHTEN UP SECURITY AHEAD OF POTENTIAL 'HOLIDAY HEISTS'**

### **MAILBOX & PROPERTY THEFT A GROWING CONCERN FOR BODIES CORPORATE TO DEAL WITH**

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South Australian apartment owners be warned, Santa might not be the only person dropping into the house in the dead of the night these holidays, with 'holiday heists' a growing concern for strata complexes.

As potentially thousands of residents in South Australia prepare to leave town for the holidays, a leading body corporate company is urging owners to double check their apartment security, with empty lots the target of thieves.

According to a report on claims data from RACV Insurance, rented properties are 70 per cent more likely to be burgled than owner-occupied homes, and experts say that densely-packed urban areas where apartment living is rife are targets for opportunist thieves. (Editors – see attached)

And on top of this, figures from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research also show that Christmas and New Year's Eve are peak times for burglaries and break-ins with an increase in daily offences up to nearly 30 per cent during the holidays.

Ace Body Corporate Management (Ace) is one of Australia's largest strata management companies and CEO Stephen Raff says that strata communities must be aware of the increased risks of property theft over the holidays and to ensure that the proper security measures are in place to prevent a potentially devastating incident.

"Police records are showing an increase in property crime in Australian regions, with particular emphasis on secure apartment complexes and we're urging owners in South Australia to be vigilant ahead of the holiday period."

"Of major concern is mailbox theft, due to many residents and owners not collecting mail during the holiday period, which opens communities up to serious identity theft."



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Mr Raff says in some cases it's easier for burglars to get into larger apartment complexes where tenants would be less concerned about letting unfamiliar faces in.

"So often it is a case of poor processes being exploited by thieves, and we're eager to owners make a concerted effort to follow their community security policies as closely as possible to deter thieves."

This month, 19 break-ins occurred over a night in by a suspected group in Townsville, many of which were facilitated by unlocked properties.

Mr Raff says Ace is encouraging strata communities to be one step ahead when it comes to property security.

"Of the hundreds of thousands of burglaries recorded in Australia annually, the most common methods of entry are through an unlocked door or window, even at times when occupiers are inside."

"Security measures like having grilles on windows and doors, having adequate lighting or CCTV cameras around complexes act as deterrents for potential thieves.

"They'll be looking for easy targets so setting up more obstacles for them to tackle may stop them from scoping out your building in the first place."

Mr Raff says when you consider how many residents collectively live in apartment and unit blocks, it's no wonder why strata communities are being targeted.

"Unsecured apartment complexes present thieves with a 'one stop shop' to explore crimes like mailbox theft, car and property theft so it's important both owners corporations and owners alike start taking steps to ensure their communities are a hard nut to crack."

"We'd recommend that residents also be diligent and look out for their neighbours. Any suspicious behaviour should be reported to the authorities."

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## About Ace Body Corporate Management

Ace Body Corporate Management (Ace) is the largest 100% Australian owned strata management company with franchises and their support staff managing property worth an estimated replacement value of \$20 billion. All franchisees are members of Strata Community Australia; the peak national body that looks after the interests of the community by liaising with Government on strata legislative requirements to keep up with industry change. Ace currently manages over 60,000 strata title units nationwide. Ace proudly fulfils the dual roles of a professional organisation and a leader for industry education and advocacy. Website: [www.acebodycorp.com.au](http://www.acebodycorp.com.au)

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