



# The RentCover Report

Industry News and Views from EBM

12|07

## RentCover report – we've got you covered

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Season's greetings and welcome to the December edition of the RentCover report!

While some call this the silly season, it's also a time when many of us take a break from work, so it's timely to remind ourselves of the importance of having a happy as well as safe festive season.

In this issue of the RentCover report, we provide some end-of-year reminders and summer holiday hints, and issue a warning about the risk of neglecting insurance in the context of the affordability crisis.

As part of our profile series, we'll also get to know Administration Manager Suzette Bulner a little better, and give you five New Year's resolutions to help make 2008 happy and stress free.

So, from all of us at EBM Insurance Brokers, we thank you for a fantastic year and look forward to a very successful and fulfilling 2008.

**Sharon Fox-Slater**  
General Manager, RentCover

## Take time to cover your contents

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The festive season is often a time when we reflect on the year that's been and plan for the year ahead – and that's the right time to evaluate your insurance to ensure you're adequately covered.

The home is usually where we keep our most valued belongings. Sadly, in Australia, it is estimated that some 28% of households are without insurance to cover those contents, and that figure rises to 67% for renters.

EBM Managing Director, Jeff Adams, said the festive season is the ideal time to evaluate insurance requirements.

"It's a time when most people have some time off work and can take stock of how the home is running and what might need to be updated," said Mr Adams. "If you already have insurance, review your level of cover, taking into account the value of belongings you've acquired during the year – and of course the Christmas gifts.

If you've purchased new furniture or received valuable jewellery as a gift – your policy or level of cover might need to be reviewed."

"For those who don't have cover at all, start by doing a simple room-by-room assessment of the value of your contents."

Not all household policies are the same, so it's important to seek assistance in selecting the right policy.

EBM Insurance Brokers offers a range of insurance options to cover household contents with a flexible choice of excess levels (from \$0, \$50, \$100 or more) available to suit individual needs.

Homeowners have the option of selecting cover for 'insured events' such as burglary, storm, fire and malicious damage or 'accidental damage'.

An accidental damage policy covers you for specific events as well as accidental loss and damage which may include events such as spilling a glass of wine on the carpet.

For more information about EBM's Home and Contents Cover call 1800 661 662 or visit [www.ebminsurace.com.au](http://www.ebminsurace.com.au)

## Have a happy New Year!

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We've compiled five top tips to help you and your family have a fantastic festive season and prepare for the New Year.

1. Don't make it easy for burglars. If you're leaving home for an extended period, make sure all locks and windows are secured and the alarm is set. Make arrangements to have newspapers and mail stopped or regularly collected by family, friends or a trusted neighbour. And if you're staying at home – be careful of when and where you leave windows and doors unlocked. Up to 50% of burglars don't have to forcibly break into a home – they simply walk through an open door or climb through an open window.
2. If you are planning a long car trip over the holidays, make sure your vehicle is ready for the journey by checking tyre pressure and oil and water levels.
3. Ready your house for the onslaught of summer and protect it from fire by clearing the gutters and tidying debris from the garden.
4. If you're travelling overseas, register with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au), check the latest travel warnings before your departure and make sure you have travel insurance appropriate to your destination!
5. Before heading out in your boat, ensure your structural and operational maintenance checks are complete, safety gear is on-board and in good working order, and you have a designated skipper!



## Our competition winner!

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Congratulations to the winner of our November RentCover report competition, Bev Denyer, General Manager of Harcourts Central in Western Australia.

In the event of a fire, Bev advised she would ... 'simultaneously grab for her husband and her insurance file'.

A bottle of wine is on its way for you and your much-loved husband to enjoy over summer!

## Affordability and insurance not mutually exclusive

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Owning your own home is the great Australian dream, but according to the latest affordability figures, that dream is getting harder and harder to fulfil.

The latest Home Loan Affordability Report released by Deposit Power and the Real Estate Institute of Australia shows that home affordability is at its lowest level in 22 years.

With rising interest rates adding further pressure on many Australian households, the Report found that on average, 36.6% of family income is now dedicated just to meet home loan repayments.

But as many people feel the pinch of 'mortgage stress' and others start to feel it for the first time, homeowners are reminded not to forego insurance as some sort of misguided method of 'saving' money.

EBM Managing Director Jeff Adams says families concerned about meeting mortgage and other cost-of-living payments are the last families who can afford to be without insurance.

"When household budgets are stretched thin, families are least able to meet the cost of damage to property if an accident should occur," he said.

"Media reports about house fires or devastating home burglaries end with the chilling line that "the family was not insured" all too often. And that compounds the trauma."

Recognising that housing affordability is a real challenge for many Australian families, EBM provides a range of home and contents cover that can be tailored to the needs of our clients.

By varying the amount of excess payable, identifying the level of contents cover that is most appropriate EBM Insurance Brokers offers homeowners more affordable insurance solutions.

Landlords can make sure they are well covered too with the RentCover product range offering landlords a low excess, quick settlements and cover for accidental damage – all measures that take the stress out of investment property ownership.

For more information about any of EBM's insurance solutions call 1800 661 662 or visit [www.ebminsurace.com.au](http://www.ebminsurace.com.au)

## Ensuring a happy holiday hideaway

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Summer is holiday time for hundreds of thousands of Australians. And for many of them, it's the time to escape to their own retreat.

Whether beachside bungalows, forest retreats or interstate hideaways, holiday homes can make for a welcome and relaxing break. And while some of these homes are leased throughout the year, many lie dormant until their owners arrive once or twice a year to escape their homespun routines.

Just because a holiday home is used infrequently is no reason for owners to neglect the issue of property and contents insurance. Holiday homes are still susceptible to the same risks as any home including fire, storm, water damage and unwanted intruders.

EBM offers a wide range of insurance solutions to help holiday homeowners protect their valuable assets. Owners are able to vary the amount of excess payable subject to their needs, and can include cover for specific 'defined events' such as damage caused by fire or explosion, rainwater, glass breakage and burglary.

EBM also extends cover to holiday homeowners who lease out their properties during the year. A wide range of policies such as HolidayLetCover provides extensive cover for landlords, enabling them to insure contents for up to \$50,000 and cover property against malicious and accidental damage.

Policy options also include legal liability cover up to \$20 million and cover for legal expenses to minimise financial loss.

So, take the stress out of holiday home insurance! For more information about HolidayLetCover call 1800 661 662 or visit [www.holidayletcover.com.au](http://www.holidayletcover.com.au)



## Meet a RentCover team member...

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### Suzette Bulner, Administration Manager

Suzette has been with EBM Insurance Brokers for five years and is based in RentCover's Melbourne office. After joining the company as an office temp, she quickly moved on to roles as a receptionist, assistant administration manager, team leader and is now administration manager.

Suzette facilitates a broad range of customer focussed services, taking calls from across the country with queries on a wide range of products. She often takes on difficult and complex client requests, and also handles internal administrative issues for EBM staff.

She is a regular point of contact and liaison for EBM's Business Relationship Executives (BREs), and provides advice and information on EBM's products. Some things you might not know about Suzette...

- 1. What do you like most about your position at EBM?**  
I really enjoy the variety in my role. The customer service aspect means I meet all kinds of people and deal with the different personalities. But I also enjoy the administrative reporting side of it too.
- 2. What do you find most challenging in your role?**  
Meeting deadlines! Because I am based in Melbourne, sometimes contacting BREs in other parts of the country is a challenge – particularly when the matter is urgent, which it usually is!
- 3. When not at work I...** enjoy entertaining family and friends but I also enjoy dining out too. I also have two children who keep me pretty busy as well!
- 4. If I had a three week holiday planned...** I would go to Canada to visit my sister who lives in Ontario.
- 5. I like to splurge on...** shoes and perfume.
- 6. The one piece of advice that stays with you?**  
If you snooze, you lose.



## Christmas trading hours

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The RentCover team wishes you a safe and happy festive season and reminds you that we are still available throughout the Christmas-New Year period.

Our office hours (EST) are as follows:

Monday 24 December	8.30am to 12.00pm
Thursday 27 December	8.30am to 5.00pm
Friday 28 December	8.30am to 5.00pm
Monday 31 December	8.30am to 12.00pm

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