



The RentCover Report

Industry News and Views from EBM

05|08

RentCover Report – we've got you covered

Welcome to the May edition of the RentCover Report and a busy time for all in our industry.

With the end of the financial year rapidly approaching, deductions, tax returns and fringe benefits start to become regular parts of our conversations in the office and at home. As well as getting our own finances in order, in recent weeks we have also seen state and federal budgets handed down with a number of interesting initiatives announced.

Of particular note for the property industry was the Federal Government's announcement of a \$2.2 billion package to help ease the country's housing affordability crisis. Part of the package includes a scheme to encourage first-time buyers to save a deposit for a house through superannuation-style bank accounts.

With many households suffering from 'mortgage stress', such initiatives are welcome to help families enter the property industry either through a reduction in tax or other financial incentives.

So with tax time looming, in this edition we take a timely look at the priorities for lodging tax returns. We also examine the growing trend of sustainable building options and we'll introduce you to Assistant Account Manager Jessica Whelan as part of our Staff Profile series.

As always if you have any feedback or ideas for upcoming editions of the RentCover Report we are very keen to hear them. Please email all of your suggestions to marketing@ebminsurace.com.au.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the RentCover Report and we look forward to updating you with more EBM news next edition.

Sharon Fox-Slater
General Manager, RentCover

A taxing time for all

As the saying goes, only death and taxes can be guaranteed and the task of lodging tax returns is an annual ritual few look forward to. As the financial year draws to a close, many of us will be dreading the experience, but if you think you're suffering alone, you're not.

According to the latest edition of Taxation Statistics – the Australian Tax Office's comprehensive statistical publication for the 2005/06 financial year – 13.5 million returns were lodged with individual returns



representing 85.2% of all returns lodged.

In this time of economic strength, Australian workers declared total income of \$483.1 billion, including \$350.7 billion in salaries and wages and claimed \$27 billion in total deductions, including \$13.1 billion in work-related expenses.

With more and more returns being lodged every year, EBM Insurance Brokers General Manager Sharon Fox Slater said that for rental property owners there are some easy ways to take the stress out of the process.

“Organisation is the key,” said Ms Fox Slater. “Whether you’re doing your own tax return or use an accountant, having your statements and receipts in order makes the process smarter and helps ensure you don’t miss anything.”

With the end of the financial year only weeks away, detailed information about tax returns and advice on claims relating to rental properties can be found on the Australian Tax Office website www.ato.gov.au or by speaking to your accountant.

Tax time tips for rental property owners

There are a host of expenses you can claim relating to your rental property but only for the period your property was rented or available for rent.

These expenses could include:

- advertising and marketing costs associated with finding a tenant;
- bank charges and borrowing expenses;
- insurance;
- body corporate fees, council rates and land tax;
- property agent fees or commissions;
- decline in value of depreciating assets;
- repairs and maintenance, gardening, lawn mowing and pest control;
- water charges; and
- travel undertaken to inspect the property or to collect the rent.

Going green gets thumbs up

It seems green is the new black when it comes to new home construction with a growing prominence of sustainable building practices sweeping the industry.

Though there was a decline in the general number of building approvals in the March quarter, green builders are continuing to experience strong demand.

According to Valuing Green, a recent report from the Green Building Council of Australia, evidence from a survey of property owners, developers, valuers, and extensive research shows that environmentally sustainable buildings enjoy a significant market advantage over conventional buildings, with all investors, developers and valuers believing that this advantage will increase in coming years.

The report notes that ‘green’ buildings offer a range of benefits including lower operating costs and growth in rental rates.



Many home builders are now looking at their designs and making adjustments resulting in more homes with a reduced ecological footprint that will make a difference to the environment being available to the market.

Household emissions currently contribute over 20 percent of Australia's total greenhouse gas emissions. And, given Australia's seven million households produce over 105 million tonnes of greenhouse gas, or 15 tonnes per home, the impact of an increase in sustainable building will be significant.

With many builders looking to capitalise on the increased awareness of energy efficient construction techniques, getting approval to start work quickly becomes critical, and central to that is efficient implementation of builders insurance.

EBM Insurance Brokers Managing Director Jeff Adams says EBM created BuildCover in collaboration with builders themselves to overcome some of the frustrations they face and the policy may get builders on construction sites faster.

"BuildCover is a tailored domestic warranty insurance policy that helps builders throughout Australia overcome some of the most frustrating elements in navigating through the approvals process," Mr Adams said.

"The policy helps to achieve fast turnaround of applications with a minimal need for financial information, and offers a flexible cap on the number of projects underway at any given time."

For more information about BuildCover call 1800 800 544 or visit www.buildcover.com.au.

Simple tips for a more sustainable home:

- Install AAA-rated water-saving fittings and achieve a significant reduction in the amount of water used in the home. The use of an AAA-rated showerhead will save up to 11 litres of water per minute.
- Keep your windows and external doors closed when warming or cooling your home and shut internal doors to areas which don't need to be heated or cooled.
- When buying new appliances, go for those with a four or five star energy rating to reduce your energy consumption.
- Always turn off appliances when they are not being used, where possible at the wall.
- Install energy efficient compact fluoro light bulbs which will use up to 80% less energy than incandescent bulbs and can last up to eight times longer.
- Take advantage of our warm climate and install a gas hot water system or solar hot water system.

Conference call

Time is running out to register your interest in the 2008 TCE National Property Management Conference.

The Conference is being held at the Marriott Resort, Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast across June 22 and 23 and registrations to attend are still being taken.

EBM Insurance Brokers is the major sponsor of the annual event which is well known throughout the property management industry for providing unique insights and entertaining presenters.



The two-day Conference features a variety of seminars and learning sessions offering solutions, strategies and concepts to further develop property management techniques. Specially selected speakers challenge, motivate, educate and encourage business leaders to new levels of professionalism.

This year EBM Insurance Brokers National Marketing and Development Manager Brett Clarke will be presenting a session on “How to reduce your exposure to Landlord Protection Insurance claims”.

Over the past 15 years, Brett has played a key role in developing the RentCover range of products including RentCoverUltra, RentCoverPlatinum, HolidayLetCover and TenantCover and is widely respected amongst the Real Estate and Management Rights industry.

Other speakers include renowned income acceleration coach Pat Mesiti, business coach and author Simon Treselyan, and internationally recognised business presenter Alan Patching.

The Conference also provides a valuable networking opportunity and attracts leading figures in property management from across Australia.

For those interested in attending the conference, registration forms can be obtained at www.ppmsystem.com or by calling the PPM Group on 07 5592 6511.

PRINCIPAL’S PROPERTY MANAGEMENT FOCUS GROUP RETREAT

EBM are also the major sponsors for this event to be held on the Gold Coast from 24/08/2008 to 26/08/2008, exclusive to Principal’s and Department Managers. The two day event has been designed to assist you to create a more productive and profitable rent roll and includes a whole host of expert panellists. To download a brochure and application form simply go to <http://www.ppmsystem.com/images/Principalbrochure08.pdf>

Meet a member of the RentCover team...

Jessica Whelan is an Assistant Account Manager at EBM’s Melbourne office. She assists the Team Leaders and handles urgent inquiries, as well as policy renewals. She has been with EBM for over three years.



Here are a few things you might not know about Jessica...

1. **What do you like most about your position at EBM?** The staff I work with are fantastic and I also enjoy helping other staff members out when they are stuck or just need some further assistance.
2. **What do you find most challenging in your role?** Learning something new. Whether it is an easy task or hard task, leaning new things is definitely an attractive part of this job.
3. **When not at work I...** relax and go out with my friends. I try to make the most of my time off.
4. **If I had a three week holiday planned, I would...** go to Thailand or Fiji to relax and shop!
5. **I like to splurge on...** clothes and shoes.
6. **One piece of advice that stays with you?** Always treat people the way you would like to be treated.

You are receiving this email because the email address [email address suppressed] was subscribed to our email list. Having trouble reading this email? View it on our [website](#). Click here to [unsubscribe](#). If you would like a friend to see this email too, why don't you use our [Forward To A Friend](#) link?



All Enquiries: 1800 661 662 | admin@rentcover.com.au | www.rentcover.com.au
Sydney | Melbourne | Brisbane | Perth | Gold Coast | Bunbury | Kalgoorlie | Geraldton | Margaret River
Affiliated Offices: China | Indonesia | New Zealand | Philippines | Singapore | Taiwan | Thailand | Lloyd's Coverholder
Elkington Bishop Molineaux Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd | AFSLN 246986 | ABN 31 009 179 640 | Est 1975