DEFECTS, LIABILITY AND MAINTENANCE PERIOD

The initial defects and liability period can vary on projects but commonly contracted for a time period of 6 to 12 months from date of practical completion as outlined in the formal instrument of agreement between the Principal (developer) and the Contractor (builder). This defects liability period will be outlined in the ‘Owner’s Manual’ supplied by the principal on handover.

The approach employed on receipt of alleged defective building work is to send a representative to assess the building work and then make a decision as to whether the builder has liability for performing rectification work. Damage caused by use or by other contractors is not the builder’s responsibility.

Not all problems are due to faulty and defective workmanship during construction. Just as items wear out on a new vehicle after a period of time which the consumer rather than the manufacturer replaces, so it is with new homes. Replacement of items due to wear and tear is not the builder’s responsibility. A builder is only liable when defects emerge due to faulty and/or unsatisfactory workmanship that affects the structural integrity of the building.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Corrective and routine maintenance by individual owners and strata is paramount; give early and regular attention to maintenance schedules and general cleaning. This can prevent more serious damage to your property. Fix these things early. Ensure your maintenance cycle is clearly documented.

CLEANING & MAINTENANCE

Insufficient cleaning and or the use of inappropriate cleaning materials can ruin the appearance of building materials, fixtures and fittings in and around your home.

If surfaces and products are exposed to salt, air or industrial pollutants they should be washed regularly.

Use non-abrasive cleaning products and mild detergents with plenty of water in all areas of your home to extend the life of the surface and its appearance.

Condensation is an important factor to be aware of within your home, ensure adequate ventilation is present if there is a build-up of condensation inside the house.
Maintain all door seals and shower screen seals to ensure water does not penetrate areas that are not intended to cope with moisture. Replacing seals that are defective forms a part of routine maintenance.

Maintain all door and window fittings and lubricate moving parts regularly. Screws on locks and hinges may require occasional attention, particularly if they are subject to frequent use.

If cracks or leaks are noticed, it is important to have it repaired or replaced immediately.

Painted surfaces require routine inspection and cleaning occasionally. Avoid using excessive water on painted surfaces.

Timber surfaces must be maintained regularly and with care. Timber is a natural product that absorbs and expels moisture to keep the balance of its surroundings. This can result in movement and depending on the type of timber, visible movement may occur.

EFFLORESCENCE

Efflorescence is a powdery white salt deposit that can form on cement-based products like bricks, mortar, grout and sometimes concrete. It usually appears when dry, hot weather follows a period of cool wet weather. Evaporation of surface water draws out salt from porous products like bricks which settle on the brick surface. Firmly brushing the powder off the brickwork is the best solution, but in difficult situations extremely diluted hydrochloric acid can be used to eradicate the efflorescence.

CRACKING – CORNICES AND PLASTER CRACKS

Cracking cornices and plaster cracks are a common feature that often occurs naturally in a new building. Ground movement and natural settling can occur with minor cracks appearing in walls or cornices, often several years after the building has been completed.

Many purchasers incorrectly believe that this type of cracking is the builders’ responsibility to rectify. The builder’s liability will not extend to purely maintenance items which are the owner’s responsibility.

APPLIANCES

In the case of defective white goods, common sense should prevail in that the manufacturer’s warranty would be the initial reference point for the consumer. Failures should be reported directly to the manufacturer / service agent.

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NOTIFICATION OF PROPERTY DEFECT

Date:

Property Address: _____________________________________________________________

Apartment Number: ___________________________________________________________

Request submitted by: Owner ☐ Tenant ☐ Property/Building Manager ☐ Strata ☐

Name: ______________________________________________________________________

Phone (business hours): ____________________________________________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________________________________________

Contact for access: As Above ☐ Strata ☐ Owner ☐ Tenant ☐ Building Manager ☐ Property Manager ☐

Name: ______________________________________________________________________

Phone (business hours): ____________________________________________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________________________________________

Defect Details: New issue ☐ follow up ☐

Please list area of concern by location and provide as much description as possible to summarise (if insufficient space available please include document for attachment):