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## QLD PROPERTY MANAGERS PROVE THEIR COVID-19 'ESSENTIAL' WORTH REIQ RESIDENTIAL RENT REDUCTION SURVEY STATS

A recent industry survey conducted by the Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) reveals that Property Managers across Queensland's real estate industry have performed more than double the amount of 'heavy lifting' when it comes to rent negotiations between landlords and rental tenants outside of the Palaszczuk Government's [Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation \(COVID-19 Emergency Response\) Regulation 2020](#).

REIQ CEO Antonia Mercorella says industry data like this is vital to help understand the essential nature of the real estate sector during unique circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic and its role in supporting the broader Queensland economy. "This member survey aimed to identify a whole-of-industry snapshot in regards to the important role and to what scale our sector played in negotiating temporary reduced rents on behalf of more than 14,000 rental tenants with their landlords," explains Ms. Mercorella. "Real estate professionals manage close to 600,000 Queensland households through property management services. The demand for more effective recognition of our industry during any future crisis of this nature is now more apparent, with property managers overseeing more than a double caseload of temporary rent reduction requests from tenants suddenly faced with the inability to fulfil their rent obligations."

With over 1,200 REIQ property management member agencies surveyed throughout Queensland, the results show that only 6.05% of residential rental tenants qualified as "COVID-19 impacted" under the State Government's *COVID-19 Emergency Response Regulation*. This represents approximately 3,950 renters from a State total in excess of 577,000 residential tenancies (Census, 2016). A tenancy is generally deemed to be "COVID-19 impacted" if a tenant is impacted by COVID-19 in certain ways and in addition, the tenant has suffered a loss of income of 25% or more, or the rent payable is 30% or more of a person's income. A majority of negotiations achieved a satisfactory outcome regarding temporary rent reductions, with fewer than 800 referred to the Residential Tenancies Authority for further conciliation.

Furthermore, Property Managers proactively negotiated an additional 14% of temporary rent reduction requests beyond the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Regulation*, representing over 10,800 residential tenancies. That's more than double the amount of qualified lease renegotiations recognised as 'COVID-19 impacted.' The bulk of these temporary rent reduction reviews took place across Brisbane (37.2%), Gold Coast (14.88%), Sunshine Coast (12.09%) and Cairns (6.51%) with the majority of tenants requiring a rent reduction of up to \$100 per week (69.3%). A further 23.72% of rental tenants have required a temporary rent reduction of up to \$200; 5.12% a reduction of up to \$300; and, 1.86% a reduction of over \$300 which represents just over 200 tenants.

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“By the time the Prime Minister’s proposed protective measures for residential tenancies via a six-month moratorium on evictions reached the Palaszczuk Government, a highly-coordinated industry campaign for more fair and balanced protections for both tenants and landlords ensued,” says Ms. Mercorella. “However, the REIQ recognised that many rental tenants and landlords simply couldn’t wait. Large scale job losses were already in motion, with the entertainment, events, food and beverage, and tourism industries virtually grinding to a halt overnight. As a result, we were quick to work proactively with Property Managers across our member agencies to achieve an immediate framework of resources for tenants and property owners in significant financial distress to come together to negotiate temporary rent reductions in order reach an amicable outcome for both parties.

“The role our industry’s Property Managers have played throughout this pandemic is truly exemplary,” adds Ms. Mercorella. “In recognition of this and the essential value our Property Managers have proven, the REIQ is delighted to also announce the launch the inaugural *National Property Managers’ Day*. They really are the unsung heroes of this pandemic, working at the coalface, renegotiating rental terms and dealing with issues between tenants and property owners who have either lost their jobs or their livelihoods severely impacted.”

Recognising the incredible efforts that both Residential and Commercial Property Managers put in during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the REIQ have created a day of celebration to show our support. Set to take place on **Friday, 24 July 2020**, we’re encouraging everyone across Queensland to join us in showing their support and appreciation for their favourite Property Managers and to acknowledge the tireless work they continue to do as we navigate through to the other side of this pandemic. People can use the hashtag **#nationalpropertymanagersday** to share their stories and provide a shout out for their favourite Property Manager.

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**About The REIQ:** The Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) is the state’s peak professional association for real estate practitioners across the state. The Association’s purpose is to make important contributions to government policy direction, industry research and development, tailored educational programs and training, and the promotion of industry standards.

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