



MEDIA RELEASE

Historic National Catholic Safeguarding Standards launched

THURSDAY 30 MAY 2019

Catholic Professional Standards Limited has released the historic National Catholic Safeguarding Standards in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Speaking shortly after the release, CEO Sheree Limbrick said that during the Royal Commission, Catholic leaders committed to establishing nationally consistent standards and to the audit and public reporting of the compliance of Church Authorities with those standards.

“The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and their supporting criteria build on the Royal Commission’s child safe standards and harmonise with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations,” Ms Limbrick said.

“In addition, the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards include seven further criteria unique to the Catholic Church in response to specific Royal Commission recommendations and in light of consultations leading to the development of the Standards.

“CPSL has commenced auditing and we will release our first public reports on those audits around mid-year.

“While the Royal Commission praised the approach of entities including Catholic education and Catholic social services which are already heavily regulated, it also exposed many gaps in Church activities, especially at a local level and in ministries where there has been no external oversight or there has been poor understanding or implementation of what is needed in an organisation to protect children.

“By establishing CPSL the Church leadership has acknowledged past failures in leadership and committed to a radical change in Church culture, including clearer accountability and transparency.

“Adoption of the Standards, auditing and reporting processes is a practical demonstration of the strength of that commitment by bishops and religious leaders and we’ll be posting a list of participating Church authorities on the CPSL website.

“While it is not compulsory to participate in the audit process, many Church Authorities are in the process of signing up.

“The Standards result from 18 months of consultation and testing, and have been mapped against state legislation, the recommendations made by the Royal Commission and by national bodies and overseas experience. They take the new National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and apply them to the Catholic Church context.

“The Standards, which will be reviewed in 2021 are backed up by a comprehensive training and development program and a suite of additional material.

“CPSL’s audits augment existing regulatory requirements and avoid duplication of existing regulation.

“Together, the ten Standards provide the framework for each entity, ministry and organisation across the Catholic Church in Australia to place child safety at the core of how it plans, thinks and acts,” Ms Limbrick said.

National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

Standard 1: Committed leadership, governance and culture

Child safeguarding is embedded in the entity’s leadership, governance and culture

Standard 2: Children are safe, informed and participate

Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Standard 3: Partnering with families, carers and communities

Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safeguarding

Standard 4: Equity is promoted, and diversity is respected

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Standard 5: Robust human resource management

People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safeguarding values in practice

Standard 6: Effective complaints management

Processes for raising concerns and complaints are responsive, understood, accessible and used by children, families, carers, communities and personnel

Standard 7: Ongoing education and training

Personnel are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through information, ongoing education and training

Standard 8: Safe physical and online environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed

Standard 9: Continuous improvement

Entities regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children safe

Standard 10: Policies and procedures support child safety

Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children

The [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#) are available on CPSL’s website.

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd is a not-for-profit public company, limited by guarantee. It was established by the leadership of the Catholic Church during the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to develop national safeguarding standards, to audit the compliance of Church Authorities with those standards and to publicly report the results. CPSL is functionally independent of the Church.

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