



ACSL
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING LTD

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd welcomes Dr Ursula Stephens as new CEO

29 April, 2021

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) has today announced the appointment of Dr Ursula Stephens as its new Chief Executive Officer.

Dr Stephens, who is currently CEO of Catholic Social Services Australia, replaces outgoing ACSL CEO Ms Sheree Limbrick.

Dr Stephens has previously worked as an educator, a senior NSW public servant, an Australian senator and been involved in numerous community-led initiatives to support community engagement and inclusion. She brings with her a wealth of experience in advocacy, policy development and relationship building, alongside a depth of experience gained from being part of and working within numerous Catholic organisations.

Chair of ACSL's Board Professor The Hon. Michael Lavarch said the appointment of Dr Stephens followed a thorough executive search process and was approved by representatives of the company's members - the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Religious Australia and the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons.

"The search process attracted a number of well qualified candidates from inside and outside Catholic organisations and ACSL is grateful for the interest and the support demonstrated for the company's work. We believe Dr Stephen's experience in public life, her extensive work on social justice issues and her good grounding in safeguarding will equip her well to lead ACSL," Professor Lavarch said.

He said Dr Stephens joins ACSL at an important juncture as the company continues to reshape its focus on how to best assist the Church to ensure it provides a safe and nurturing environment for children and adults at risk.

"The Board is developing the company's strategic plan and seeks to work with the diverse organisations within the Church to strengthen a culture of safeguarding that always has the interests of children and vulnerable people at the centre of Church activities. Dr Stephens has a strong track record of working across the Church and this skill will greatly assist ACSL."

Professor Lavarch also paid tribute to outgoing CEO Sheree Limbrick.

"Ms Limbrick has done a wonderful job in establishing the company and having the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards accepted as the benchmark for good practice across the Church. Sheree has put tremendous energy into equipping the Church to be a more capable and more transparent community when it comes to protecting children. The Board is enormously grateful for her leadership."

Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) was established in December 2020 and is a company limited by guarantee, owned by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Religious Australia and the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons. ACSL has responsibilities at a national level and brings together the work of two previous entities, Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) and the Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards (ACCPS).

ACSL works with the Catholic Church in Australia to support and foster a nationally consistent culture of safety and care throughout the Church. ACSL provides a range of services to the Church to support their implementation of the [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#), a framework for the protection and care of adults at risk and children.

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