

- MEDIA RELEASE -

Audit of the Scalabrinian Congregation finds widespread commitment to child safeguarding

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An audit report published today by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) has found child safety practices are largely developed and embedded across the Missionaries of St Charles – Scalabrinians.

The audit assessed the Scalabrinian Congregation’s implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS), an Australia-wide framework for Catholic organisations aimed at building a culture of shared responsibility for safeguarding. The NCSS outlines measures aimed at preventing, detecting and responding appropriately to potential or actual incidents of abuse of children or adults at risk.

The audit found the Scalabrinian Congregation has implemented 95 per cent of the NCSS indicators relevant to their operations, with most indicators well embedded.

ACSL Chief Executive Officer Dr Ursula Stephens remarked that a tremendous amount of time, energy and resources have been devoted by the Scalabrinians to creating safe environments for children within their communities.

‘This is a great result for a religious Congregation who are immersed in archdioceses and dioceses across Australia. The appointment of a specialist safeguarding consultant in recent years has enhanced the Congregation’s capacity to effectively safeguard children and young people from abuse, not only in Australia but also in the Congregation’s overseas ministries, where considerable resources have been dedicated to developing safeguarding practices. Continued attention to these overseas ministries has been outlined in the Scalabrinians safeguarding implementation plan, which we commend.’

‘Our audit included a review of the Congregation’s safeguarding related documents, policies and procedures, as well as site visits, interviews, observations and enquiry with a range of personnel, including Congregation leaders. This process has allowed us to generate a set of recommendations for the Scalabrinians that will assist them to more deeply embed safeguarding systems, as well as reinforce the Congregation’s cultural commitment to the safety of children.’

‘Our recommendations to the Scalabrinians are mainly around formalising existing practices, so they are more robust and can be more easily monitored. For instance, our audit team noted that while risk assessments for individual ministry activities are being completed, there isn’t oversight at the congregational level of all the different activities. To remediate this, we have recommended that an aggregate congregational risk register be developed, so that the Safeguarding Committee can regularly monitor risks at this level.’

‘All eight of the auditor’s recommendations have been accepted by the Scalabrinian leadership, who we would like to thank for their cooperation and assistance throughout the NCSS audit process,’ Dr Stephens said.

ACSL is currently working with Australian Catholic Church entities to reach the goal of having all Catholic dioceses and large religious institutes audited or reviewed against the NCSS by the end of 2025.

View the Scalabrinian Missionaries audit report on [ACSL’s website](#).