



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC ANTI-SLAVERY NETWORK RELEASE

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENTS SUBMITTED, MORE WORK TO DO

“Catholic organisations in Australia are at the forefront of the Modern Slavery response, bringing hope and help to people who are vulnerable.”

Moe Turaga, Lived Experience Advisor, ACAN

Forty-four Catholic organisations submitted their annual Modern Slavery Statements to the Australian Government this week as part of the ACAN Compendium of Catholic Modern Slavery Statements.

“Submission day is the end result of 18 months of work by corporate governance staff in Catholic organisations across Australia,” ACAN Executive Officer Alison Rahill said.

“Each Statement sets out what a particular organisation has done to assess, address and mitigate the risk of modern slavery, in its own operations and supply chains.”

“ACAN program managers work with Catholic organisations throughout the year, undertaking supplier engagement, scheduling events and activities to raise awareness, and keeping organisations on track to meet continuous improvement requirements for their reporting.”

The combined annual procurement expenditure by Catholic organisations in ACAN totalled \$9.5 billion in 2024. More than half of that spend was with suppliers of good and services in categories and industries that are considered to have a high risk for modern slavery.

“The three largest high risk spend categories are building and construction, facility management and property maintenance, and medical devices and supplies,” Ms Rahill said.

Over the 2024 reporting period, Catholic organisations significantly increased their engagement with suppliers.

“We have been encouraged to see an overall increase of 50% in the number of surveys completed by suppliers to Catholic organisations,” Ms Rahill explained.

“There are over 57,000 suppliers of goods or services in high risk categories. The largest cohort of workers at risk are temporary migrants, cleaners, care workers and construction workers in operational environments.”



The Modern Slavery Statements covering the 2024 calendar year are available for viewing on the ACAN website and will be published on the Australian Government online Register.

“ACAN staff are continuing to improve our reporting systems and processes to make real-time data available for easy monitoring and action by our member organisations,” Ms Rahill said.

“Recent media reports and our own involvement with at-risk groups, confirm that forced labour is a significant, under-reported problem in Australia and our region.”

The ACAN Compendium of Modern Slavery Statements will be officially launched at events to mark the United Nations World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

The Compendium will include an Executive Summary reviewing the collective actions taken by Catholic organisations, along with a range of suggested initiatives for the 2025 reporting year.

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Background:

Catholic organisations have been working together through the ACAN risk management program since the Australian Modern Slavery Act 2018 came into force.

Each Modern Slavery Statement is a record of the considerable work undertaken to demonstrate compliance with the reporting criteria set out in the Act.