

Catholic Safeguarding Australia

**A national office for oversight
and coordination of
safeguarding and professional
standards for the Catholic
Church in Australia**

**A report to the Safeguarding Steering
Committee of the Australian Episcopal
Conference of the Roman Catholic Church
and Catholic Religious Australia**

**Institute of Child Protection Studies,
Australian Catholic University**

April 17, 2020

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Naturally, any errors or omissions are those of the authors.

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It would be better for him to have a millstone hung around his neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble.

Luke 17:2

Looking back to the past, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead to the future, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated. The pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so it is urgent that we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults.

Letter of Pope Francis to the People of God, 28 August 2018

...it is a mistake to assume that sexual abuse in institutions will not continue to occur in the future. There is a need for the continuing development of effective government regulation, improvement in institutional governance and increased community awareness of child abuse in institutions ...We must also develop our understanding of the needs of those who have been abused and be prepared to respond to those needs... ...it is the responsibility of governments and institutions to consider and respond to our conclusions and recommendations ...it is important that the momentum for change initiated by the Royal Commission's work is not lost and that lasting changes to protect children are implemented.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017a, pp. 3-4)

The ACBC and CRA are grateful to the Royal Commission for the service it has rendered to both the country and the Catholic Church, and we thank especially the survivors of abuse who showed such courage in coming forward to bear witness to their suffering. To them and their families we offer our sincere and unreserved apology, and we commit anew to doing whatever we can to heal the wounds of abuse and to make the Church a truly safe place for all.

ACBC-CRA Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, August 2018

Glossary

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| ACBC* | Australian Catholic Bishops Conference |
| ACCPS | Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards |
| ACFID | Australian Council for International Development |
| ACMR | Australian Catholic Ministry Register |
| ACNC | Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission |
| ACRL | Australian Catholic Redress Limited |
| ACU | Australian Catholic University |
| AIHW | Australian Institute of Health and Welfare |
| AMPJP* | Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons |
| Children and young people | Those persons under the age of 18 |
| Church Authority | A bishop, a leader of a religious institute or other juridical person, and the senior administrative authority of an autonomous lay organisation, and their authorised delegates, responsible for the Church body to which the accused person is or was connected at the time of the alleged abuse |
| Catholic Entity | A diocese, religious institute and any other juridical person, body corporate, organisation or association, including autonomous lay organisation, that exercises pastoral ministry within, or on behalf of, the Catholic Church |
| Civil Authorities | Members of the police service as well as officials of the government departments responsible for child protection, for the administration of laws relating to complaints of sexual harassment, for the discipline of professions and for industrial relations |
| Communities of practice | Organised groups of people who have a common interest in a specific technical or business domain. They collaborate regularly to share information, improve their skills, and actively work on advancing the general knowledge of the domain |
| CPSL | Catholic Professional Standards Limited |
| CRA* | Catholic Religious Australia |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| IAG | Implementation Advisory Group |
| ICPS | Institute of Child Protection Studies, at the Australian Catholic University |
| Members | Members of a Company (such as CPSL currently, and the proposed National Office), which can include Catholic dioceses, congregations and institutions, and Public Juridic Persons providing education, health and aged care, social and community services, pastoral care and other services |
| National Office | Catholic Safeguarding Australia (the proposed new national office) |
| NCSS | National Catholic Safeguarding Standards |
| Professional standards | The qualities and practices essential for the ethical and safe pastoral ministry |
| Religious | A member of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life |
| Religious Institute | An institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life |
| Religious Orders | An organised community of people who live in some way set apart from society in accordance with their specific religious devotion, usually characterised by the principles of the founder's religious practice |
| Survivor-Victim | The person against whom the abuse was directed |
| The Royal Commission | The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse |
| Vulnerable person | A person who has recently suffered bereavement, marriage breakdown or other such adversity making them in particular need of pastoral support, or a person with an intellectual disability, mental illness or other impairment that makes it difficult for that person to protect themselves from abuse or exploitation |

* Associations of Church Authorities

Sources:

Australian Catholic Bishops Council and the Catholic Religious Australia (2010) *Towards Healing - Principles and procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia*, NSW

<https://www.yourdictionary.com/religious-order>

<https://www.organisationalmastery.com/communities-of-practice/>

1. Executive summary

The safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable persons is a present and ongoing concern not just for Church Authorities and entities across Australia, but for all government and civil society organisations. However, for the Church its commitment to respect the essential dignity of each person, places an elevated responsibility for safeguarding on Church Authorities.

There has been significant effort in recent years to build better safeguarding within the Catholic Church in Australia and its entities. To ensure the optimal arrangements for safeguarding are in place the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) commissioned two reviews of the safeguarding systems and processes across the diversity of Church Authorities and Catholic Entities in Australia. The first review report, *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA* (April 2019), began the process of mapping existing structures and processes in Church Authorities. Having considered this report, the ACBC and CRA then established the Safeguarding Steering Committee (the Committee) in July 2019 to complete the mapping, to review current approaches, and to design a costed operational model for safeguarding across Catholic Entities.

In 2019, the Committee commissioned the Australian Catholic University's Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) to conduct a high-level mapping exercise, and develop an operating model and a business case specifying how the Catholic Church could effectively and efficiently provide safe places for all people, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable persons, in its places of worship and ministry.

Guided by the Committee, the ICPS project methodology entailed four key stages: desktop review; consultations with staff from stakeholder entities; the development of an operational model; and the drafting of this report. The desktop review entailed the analysis and synthesis of data relevant to safeguarding and professional standards practice. It analysed the Royal Commission recommendations (including those specifically addressed to the Church), data collected for the April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA* and legislative and regulatory regimes in civil society. The qualitative data were used to define key functions or operational areas for an effective national operating model. The mapping exercise also entailed tests to ensure that all the elements of the proposed operational areas would work together to enhance and extend the existing safeguarding work undertaken by the Church.

The ICPS mapping exercise identified that many entities have developed systems and processes designed to prevent and respond to abuse. Even so, the consultations revealed a need for further targeted guidance and support to ensure more consistent approaches to the prevention of and responses to abuse. Targeted guidance and support need to occur through a strong foundation of measured and informed strategic oversight as well as enhanced mechanisms for coordination and collaboration. Consequently, this report proposes a broad and comprehensive national structure to oversee and coordinate the consistency, quality, efficacy and coverage of the safeguarding and professional standards systems and processes. It recommends the creation of a national office, to be known as Catholic Safeguarding Australia (the National Office). See Figure 1.

In the development of the proposed National Office, the focus has been to build on the existing foundations that were fit for purpose. That purpose is to support and develop ways of working that effectively and efficiently contribute to the prevention of, and effective responses to, abuse.

The National Office provides a means of strengthening:

- governance, leadership and accountability (including guiding where necessary cultural change)
- strategic advice
- coordination
- compliance and controls
- engagement and learning.

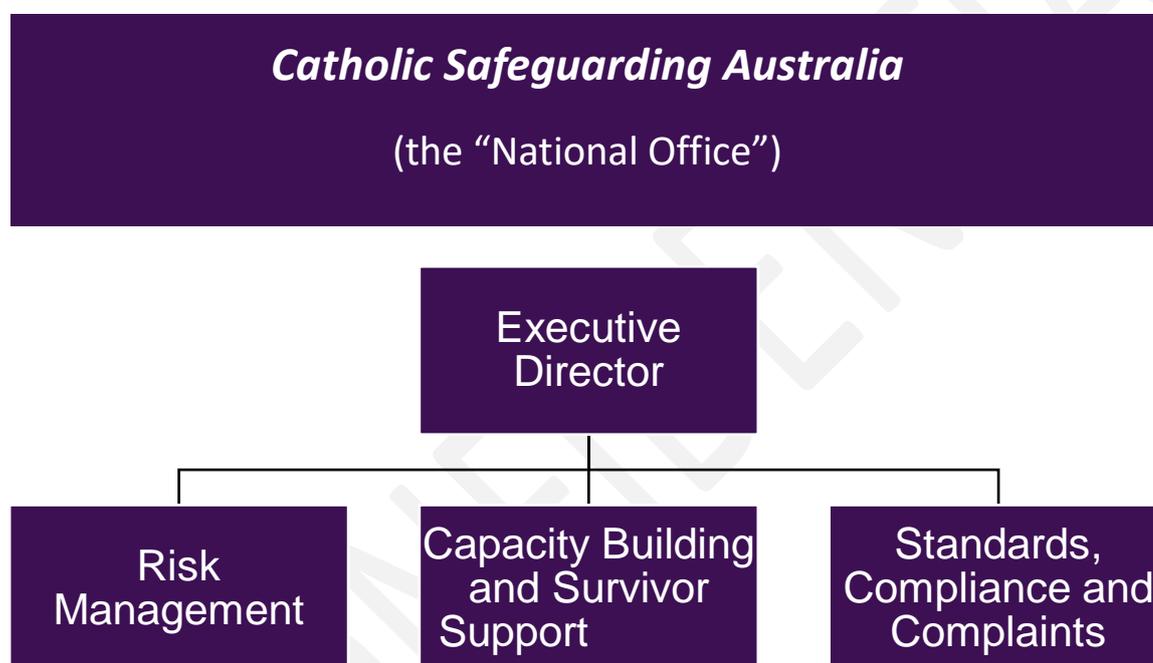


Figure 1. Proposed National Office structure

Catholic Safeguarding Australia (the National Office) would assume the tasks and responsibilities of the Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards (ACCPS) (including the Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR)) and Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL). Any residual tasks of the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG), which is nearing the completion of its mission, could be assigned to the National Office, at the discretion of Church Leaders.

The proposed National Office would be led by an Executive Director and comprise three key operational areas: (1) Risk Management; (2) Capacity Building and Survivor Support; and (3) Standards, Compliance and Complaints.

Its work would be based around supporting the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS). The NCSS—along with ongoing guidance and support for their implementation—should operate as the framework for the safeguarding work of the Catholic Church in Australia and its entities.

There will be several key decisions to be made in the transition to the proposed National Office. Some will be foundational – to be made by the coordinated leadership of Church Authorities. The decisions will relate to the establishment of the National Office; the transitions of functions and tasks from existing bodies and advisory groups; the reviews of bodies or functions and where necessary the winding up of existing bodies. Others will be more operational and may require external advice and negotiation. These will include support for the establishment of national data collation and information technology and information sharing systems, the adoption and roll out of support and oversight functions, and the recognition and the development of collaborative models and communities of practice among Catholic Entities.

The report contains a provisional annual Budget for operating the proposed National Office. It includes staffing and on-costs; rent; communications and technology; and Board costs, totaling \$1,965,702. Costs were estimated using data for expenses for senior executives from the not-for-profit sector, staff salary costs from the higher education sector, Board remuneration from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). This represents a substantial cost-saving when compared to the information made available, which suggests current annual costs for existing entities has been around \$4–\$4.5 million. However, the Budget does not include establishment or transitional costs. To identify transitional costs would require detailed financial and other data from the bodies affected in a move from several to one national office.

In keeping with a commitment to the dignity of each person, and to providing safe places of worship and service, we recommend that the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) undertake the following steps:

A new National Office:

1. Establish a new National Office, comprised of an Executive Director, with three key, interlinked oversight operational areas: (1) Risk Management; (2) Capacity Building and Survivor Support; and (3) Standards, Compliance, and Complaints.
2. Agree the name of the new national office be *Catholic Safeguarding Australia* (the “National Office”).
3. Give the National Office the responsibilities currently undertaken by:
 - The Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards (ACCPS) (including the future maintenance of the Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR))
 - Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL)
 - Any residual tasks from the work of the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) could also be assigned to the National Office once the IAG concludes.

4. Agree that the National Office will be focused on supporting and equipping Church Authorities to implement the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS), which relate to ministry and service with children and young people, and the emerging standards for vulnerable persons by adopting the following measures:
 - 4.1. Continue to consult with, and seek advice from, survivor advocacy and support bodies/representatives on the implementation of the new operational model
 - 4.2. Develop a flexible risk-based audit framework, based on the existing work of CPSL, and establish a panel of approved external auditors
 - 4.3. Use the work already undertaken by CPSL on auditing and training delivery as the basis for delivery of support through a 'community of practice' to enhance the service quality and capability of Church Authorities and Entities in implementing safeguarding standards.
 - 4.4. Identify the necessary statistical data collection with Church Authorities and work with the ACBC Research Office for centralised statistical collection and/or coordination.
 - 4.5. Use the list of potential issues and recommended approaches for the proposed National Office functions outlined in this report to guide the initial phase of implementation for the National Office.
5. Focus on existing strengths in each Church Authority and Catholic Entity supported by "capacity building" and on "collaborative processes" to (a) maximise cooperation and collaboration with civil society structures and requirements (both state/territory and Commonwealth) so that the "One Church" approach is in line, and not in conflict, with the safeguarding demands of civil society; and (b) support a "One Church" approach, while recognising the need for the independence of civil legal structures and Juridic Persons and processes of Church Authorities consistent with the principle of subsidiarity.
6. Agree that the work of the National Office should be underpinned by the nine principles for design and delivery of a safeguarding and professional standards operational model for Catholic Entities in Australia set out in this report: that it is to be effective, efficient, consistent with subsidiarity, collaborative, sustainable, educative, accountable, risk-based, and responsive.
7. Consider options for the Board of Directors, and for its Members, as to how the views and wishes of children, young people, and vulnerable adults can be heard and their perspectives included.

Processes for transitioning to the new National Office:

To achieve this, it is recommended that the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) transition functions in a staged manner from existing entities to the National Office, building on the existing organisational and governance structures that exist already for CPSL:

8. Adapt the Company name and Constitution of CPSL to transition into the National Office. The aim of changing the name of the Company, and the “Objects & Powers”, is to reflect the broadened scope of work, and to make the vehicle of Catholic Safeguarding Australia “fit for purpose”.
9. Commission the Board of Directors of the new National Office to develop and implement a Change Plan that adopts an efficient and effective change management approach to the transition of functions from existing entities to the new National Office including:
 - 9.1. Review options and ACBC and CRA (and AMPJP) should decide on the physical location of the National Office based on information about current leasing arrangements, staffing profiles, new functions and existing contractual/financial arrangements of legacy entities (CPSL, IAG, and ACCPS – including the operation of ACMR) and any potential co-location with other Catholic Entities or bodies.
 - 9.2. Reflect on the implications of this model for existing diocesan/provincial or state/territory office structures and identify duplication and potential cost savings - as existing regional and state professional standards offices vary greatly.
 - 9.3. Follow proper people-management practices with legacy entities in the move to the National Office, so that recruitment, redeployment, and/or redundancies are managed pastorally and sensitively within and across entities. Although there is a strong match between many roles in the existing entities and the types of roles within the new National Office, there will inevitably be some contraction of staffing. However, the skill set may be one that individual entities might want to deploy (e.g., in Provincial or state/territory diocesan professional standards offices).
 - 9.4. Current Member representatives of CPSL should, with external assistance, identify appropriate laypeople for the Board of Directors for the National Office, as terms of CPSL Board members expire – undertaking advertising and formal recruitment as needed. The broader focus of the National Office may demand the eventual appointment of laypeople with other skills. The Board of Directors should have gender diversity, appropriate professional expertise in risk management, change management and corporate governance/planning, Canon law, child protection, safeguarding and regulation, auditing and accreditation, and adult learning.
10. Invite the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (AMPJP) to join ACBC and CRA as Members of the revised company structure and its work.

11. Establish a three-year cost-sharing agreement with Members that provides for basic infrastructure and staffing for the National Office. Unless this is agreed by ACBC, CRA (and AMPJP), it is a risk to successful implementation. This should not be a task left to the National Office to resolve; it must be developed and agreed prior to any transition, otherwise it leaves the Board, the Executive Director and staff of the National Office without assurance that they can deliver on their mandate.
12. Plan for ongoing monitoring, and a substantive external review within three years of the National Office and its impact on achieving cultural change and delivering on the recommendations of the Royal Commission.
13. Retain Australian Catholic Redress Limited (ACRL) as a separate registered company to represent the Group Members of ACRL under the Australian Government's National Redress Scheme, with appropriate communication mechanisms to support the National Office in areas like risk and survivor support.

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2. Setting the scene

2.1. Internal drivers for change

The Catholic Church's profound and ongoing commitment to the enduring teaching in scripture of the dignity of each person underpins its efforts to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable persons. Church Authorities—as well as individual Catholic Entities—have developed a range of systems and processes designed to prevent and respond to abuse.

For all that has been achieved to date, more work is required. For instance, in February 2019 Archbishop Coleridge called for “a workable mechanism to ensure proper accountability for bishops, particularly bishops who have been derelict in this issue of child protection¹.”

This report focuses on future requirements at a national level to provide oversight of and support for the safeguarding and professional standards services for Church Authorities. It is intended to be consistent with Pope Francis' establishment within Vatican City of a central office to provide practical guidance to Dicasteries of the Roman Curia and Institutions connected to the Holy See – and his call to all Conferences of Bishops globally. See: Motu Proprio 26 March 2019²

Different entities have been established by Church Authorities for safeguarding and professional standards services. Several national bodies currently exist:

- **Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL)** – Established in 2016, CPSL guided the development of National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) and now audits compliance with those standards
- **Implementation Advisory Group (IAG)** – Established in 2018 with a two-year term, the IAG monitors and coordinates responses to select recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Additionally, the IAG set up a Governance Review Project Team (endorsed by the ACBC and CRA) to provide expert advice on the governance of dioceses and parishes (in accordance with recommendation 16.7³ of the Royal Commission)⁴.

¹ Cited in Bowling, February 21, 2019: <https://catholicleader.com.au/slideshow/archbishop-mark-coleridge-under-a-global-media-spotlight-in-rome-as-abuse-summit-begins>

² http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190326_latutela-deiminori.html

³ The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference should conduct a national review of the governance and management structures of dioceses and parishes, including in relation to issues of transparency, accountability, consultation and the participation of lay men and women. This review should draw from the approaches to governance of Catholic health, community services and education agencies.

⁴ The ACBC CRA Safeguarding Steering Committee and the IAG have communicated to avoid duplication in their tasks and reports. Both groups are due to report to a joint session of the May 2020 meeting of the ACBC and CRA.

- **Australian Catholic Redress Limited (ACRL)** – Established in 2018, ACRL responds to the requirements of the National Redress Scheme for ACBC⁵.
- **Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards (ACCPS)** – In 2019, the former National Committee of Professional Standards (NCPS) ceased operations and ACCPS was established with a one-year term to undertake a range of functions related to professional standards and complaints management.

For all the fine work of these bodies, a lot of it has occurred in silos – with the work of each body set apart from or separate to the work of another. More work is needed to create a holistic approach, where one body provides oversight and coordination of safeguarding and professional standards across the Church. The need for such a holistic approach was identified by the Royal Commission. Accordingly, the recommendations of the Royal Commission underpinned analysis for the creation an integrated, comprehensive national operational model that oversees and coordinates the consistency, quality, efficacy and coverage of safeguarding and professional standards systems and processes across the Church.

2.2. External drivers for change

There have been numerous inquiries into sexual abuse in the Catholic Church and its agencies in the USA, in European countries, some South American countries, Ireland and the United Kingdom. These inquiries revealed the systemic nature of the abuse, the systemic failure to protect children, young people and vulnerable persons, and the inadequate governance arrangements that contributed to the poor leadership responses.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

In Australia, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) was established in 2012 after many years of allegations of the sexual abuse of children in institutional contexts. Over 5 years, it heard 8,000 plus personal stories (from victim-survivors and their family) in private sessions, and it undertook a forensic examination of many institutions resulting in 57 case studies of organisations and issues. As a result of the work of the Royal Commission, we now know that thousands of children have been sexually abused in many institutions in Australia over many years.

More than half of the victim-survivors that spoke to the Royal Commission described child sexual abuse in Catholic institutions. Of the victim-survivors who described the position of the alleged perpetrator, about three quarters spoke of alleged perpetrators in religious ministry and about a quarter as teachers. About three quarters of the victim-survivors were male and a quarter female. Their average age at the time of abuse was 11.4 years (11.6 for males and 10.5 for females). About 90% of the alleged perpetrators were male. The Royal Commission estimated that in the period from 1950 to 2010 about 7% of those who ministered were alleged perpetrators. In some Catholic institutions, the proportion was estimated to be significantly higher.

⁵ The Australian Government set up the National Redress Scheme to provide redress to people who experienced institutional child sexual abuse. The offer of redress can include access to counselling, a redress payment and a direct personal response.

The Royal Commission's recommendations covered governments, institutions and communities. For the Catholic Church, the Royal Commission recommendations called for:

- Australian Church Authorities to build strong and visible best practice in the prevention of child sexual abuse into its recruitment, selection and training for ministry (Recommendations 16.23, 16.24, 16.25)
- greater internal and external accountability and transparency to build confidence in the capability of key decision-making hierarchies within the Catholic Church to appropriately address the risks of child sexual abuse (Recommendations 16.6, 16.7, 16.11, 16.16, 16.17, 16.21, 16.22, 16.25)
- reform to replace clericalism with a culture of respect for ecclesiastical authority alongside support and respect for lay leadership and gender equity in decision making, and cooperation and alignment with responsible civil and legal regulatory systems (Recommendations 16.7, 16.8, 16.9, 16.10, 16.11, 16.12, 16.13, 16.14, 16.15, 16.16, 16.20, 16.21, 16.22, 16.24, 16.55, 16.56)
- advocacy from the ACBC for reforms that benefit not only the Catholic Church in Australia but the universal Church community (Recommendations 16.7, 16.8, 16.9, 16.10, 16.11, 16.12, 16.13, 16.14, 16.15, 16.16, 16.17, 16.18, 16.19, 16.20, 16.26, 16.55, 16.56).

Following the Royal Commission, the ACBC and CRA apologised to victims-survivors and their families, offered an assurance they would address the underlying factors that enabled abuse, and committed to providing safe environments, especially for children, young people, and vulnerable persons. The formal response of the ACBC and CRA to the final report of the Royal Commission committed to all but one of its recommendations. Further, Pope Francis convened a meeting of the Presidents of all national Bishops' Conferences in February 2019 on the Protection of Minors. The Pope followed in May 2019 with a Motu Proprio containing new norms to combat sexual abuse and to hold bishops to account for their actions.

Inquiries into safeguarding other vulnerable persons

At least two national inquiries are currently underway, examining the circumstances and treatment of vulnerable persons in Australia. These inquiries are (a) the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and (b) the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

Both inquiries will examine the preparedness of institutions to protect vulnerable persons from experiences of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The findings and recommendations from such inquiries—along with ongoing internal investigations into the prevention and responses to abuse of vulnerable persons—will drive review and response within the Church.

Reforms in civil society and other key events

The safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable persons is a present and ongoing concern not just for Catholic Entities across Australia, but for all government and civil society organisations.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018) give effect to recommendations of the Royal Commission relating to child safe standards. Endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2019, the principles provide guidance on key actions and performance measures in institutional settings. They provide a nationally consistent approach to cultivating organisational cultures and practices that foster child safety and wellbeing across all sectors in Australia.

A range of regulatory reforms are also being rolled out across Australian communities by governments to address the recommendations of the Royal Commission and strengthen safeguarding regimes for children, young people, and vulnerable persons. These reforms will, and already are, having impact upon the Catholic Church and Catholic Entities. Generally, most regulatory obligations exist at a state/territory level. For instance, Reportable Conduct schemes have been now legislated in Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory and are under consideration or development in other states and territories.

Other developments will also most likely will impact upon safeguarding. For example, the current Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, the effects of climate change and other international and national crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolding in early 2020.

The development and implementation of the NCSS for children and young people, based on these civil safeguarding principles (i.e., the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations agreed to by all Governments in Australia; see Australian Human Rights Commission, 2018) represent sound preparation for these further developments. A strong commitment to governance structures underpinned by ongoing, evolving approaches to learning and development is also required.

2.3. Arriving at this report

In September 2019, the Safeguarding Steering Committee of the ACBC and CRA (the Committee) invited ICPS to participate in a select tender process. The scope of work was for a high-level mapping exercise and the design of a quality, cost-effective operational model for Catholic Church in Australia. As the successful tenderer, ICPS committed to:

- conduct a high-level mapping of existing safeguarding regulatory obligations and needs, opportunities and challenges in safeguarding service provision within the Catholic Church Catholic in Australia
- develop an operating model specifying how the Catholic Church could effectively and efficiently mitigate the risks posed by people, places and practices to children, young people, and vulnerable persons (considering the findings of the April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA*).

This report presents the findings from the mapping exercise and resulting operating model. Appendix A contains detail of the methodology. In brief, the team undertook four stages of work:

1. **Project inception** – to confirm the project scope and confirm project timelines, key deliverables and protect status reporting mechanisms
2. **Desktop review and consultations** – to collect and synthesise data on safeguarding and professional standards service delivery in the Catholic Church in Australia and identify practice successes, challenges, gaps and duplication
3. **Operational model development** – to draft an operational model for the future effective and efficient delivery of safeguarding and professional standards services, considering the findings from the April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA*
4. **Final report** – a write up the operational model for the Committee.

This report consists of seven main sections:

- An executive summary (Section 1).
- Following this is background information to set the scene for the report (Section 2).
- Section 3 presents the findings of the mapping exercise on opportunities and challenges in the Church for safeguarding and professional standards service delivery. It draws on findings from the April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA*. It also incorporates findings from consultations ICPS undertook with representatives from across Church Authorities, including ACBC, CRA, and a range of Dioceses, Religious Institutes and other Catholic Entities.
- Section 4 presents the proposed operating model—a National Office—for oversight and coordination of safeguarding and professional standards within the Catholic Church in Australia.
- Section 5 presents indicative costings for the proposed National Office, reflecting current costs of running the existing national safeguarding and professional standards bodies.
- Section 6 provides advice on transitioning to the National Office.
- Section 7 revisits key findings and offers recommendations for the future delivery of safeguarding and professional standards within the Catholic Church in Australia.

3. Key findings from the mapping exercise

The mapping exercise entailed a high-level review of existing safeguarding regulatory obligations and the needs, opportunities and challenges of safeguarding and professional development service delivery in the Catholic Church in Australia. This section presents key findings from the review. It draws data from three sources:

- an analysis of legislative and regulatory compliance requirements in relation to the safety of children, young people, and vulnerable persons
- the findings of the April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA*
- recurring themes identified during consultations with representatives from Church Authorities, which included individual Dioceses, Religious Institutes, and other Catholic Entities.

The ICPS team conducted consultations to identify and address information gaps from the 2019 review. Although the 2019 review collected considerable data from a wide range of stakeholders, gaps remained in understandings of the needs of and risks faced by different Catholic Entities. Under the guidance of the Safeguarding Steering Committee, the ICPS undertook further select consultations to ensure Catholic Entities that were underrepresented in the earlier data had a further opportunity to provide information.

3.1. Legislative and regulatory compliance requirements in relation to safety of children, young people, and vulnerable persons

The Royal Commission recommended significant reforms of the regulatory environments that affect the Catholic Church. The changes focused on institutions (including government agencies and departments) that interact with children and young people.

Some of these changes that are required will be at the national level and will be the responsibility of the Australian Government and its national agencies to bring into effect and monitor. Many of the other recommendations will be the responsibility of state and territory governments to implement and monitor. Due to this, the implication is that the development of applicable regulatory frameworks may continue in an inconsistent and uncoordinated manner over the next few years. This poses considerable challenges for Church Authorities whose work crosses state/territory boundaries.

National

The Australian Government's [National Office for Child Safety](#) (in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet) leads the development and implementation of national priorities recommended by the Royal Commission. Key priorities include the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, Australian Government child safety policies (i.e., the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework), a National Strategy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse and improvements to information to improve child safety. Key institutions that appeared before the Royal Commission also report annually to this office in December on their progress in implementing Royal Commission recommendations.

The [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) give effect to recommendations of the Royal Commission relating to child safe standards and provide guidance on key actions and performance measures in institutional settings. Endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in February 2019, the principles provide a nationally consistent approach to cultivating organisational cultures and practices that foster child safety and wellbeing across all sectors in Australia. They also provide a framework for the monitoring and evaluation activities anticipated by the Royal Commission⁶.

The Royal Commission proposed that non-government institutions and peak bodies involved in child-related work report on their progress in implementing the Royal Commission's recommendations. The Catholic Church is one of the institutions that the Royal Commission recommended should provide annual progress reports, and a report was provided in November 2019. Reports are publicly available on the [Child Abuse Royal Commission Response website](#).

The National Office of Child Safety convened the Child Safe Sectors Leadership Group. CPSL is currently a member. The Group's role is to promote and disseminate information about child safety requirements and practices throughout sectors working with children and young people with a view to achieving a nationally consistent and evidence-based approach to child safety across Australia.

Section 2.2 of this report explores recent developments of note for vulnerable persons. These include two national inquiries into the circumstances and treatment of vulnerable persons in Australian society. The current Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, climate change and other crises such as the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic were also identified. The implication is that reforms to enhance the preparedness of institutions to provide and protect vulnerable persons are likely in future.

State and Territory

Legislative responsibility for most policy and services for children and young people and most regulatory obligations rest with the state and territory governments (largely as a result of Australia's federated system of government). National contributions to state/territory policy and regulatory frameworks usually involve funding or the establishment of national standards. Child protection, education and most community services are regulated at a state and territory level. This includes child-safe practices in youth-serving organisations.

The effective implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and most of the regulatory framework proposed by the Royal Commission require legislative and bureaucratic enforcement by state/territory governments. Enforcement will largely come about because of existing or recent developments in regulation for child safety at the state/territory level. The goal of the Royal Commission was that regulation occur in every state and territory and operate in a sufficiently consistent manner to achieve national protection for children and young people.

⁶ The NCSS closely align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The key elements of the eventual regulatory schemes will likely be:

- Pre-employment Screening (i.e., Working with Children/Vulnerable Persons Checks)
- Monitoring and compliance requirements regarding the implementation of child-safe principles or standards (a state/territory adoption of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations)
- Reportable Conduct.

The Royal Commission's intent was that these schemes operate in a nationally consistent and collaborative manner so that there is effective information sharing and consistent regulatory enforcement.

Monitoring these regulatory developments will require coordination at a national level and by Church Authorities.

At the time of this report, all states and territories have some form of pre-employment screening that aligns with the purpose and function of a Working with Children Check. The scope of each scheme varies. The Australian Government has not committed to the introduction of a national (or nationally consistent) screening scheme, which was recommended by the Royal Commission. (See: <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/pre-employment-screening-working-children-checks-and-police-checks>)

The Victorian Government has legislated Child Safe Standards applicable to all institutions including government departments and agencies providing services for children/young people.

Reportable Conduct Schemes have been legislated in Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Schemes are at various levels of consideration or development in other states and territories.

3.2. Needs, opportunities and challenges of safeguarding and professional development service delivery in the Church

Key findings from the 2019 review

Analysis of data from the April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA* and further stakeholder consultations informed the identification of needs, opportunities and challenges of safeguarding and professional development service delivery in the Church. Key guiding questions included: What needs, opportunities and challenges in safeguarding and professional standards service provision exist within the Church? What processes are efficiently and effectively addressing these needs? How to best capitalise on opportunities and mitigate challenges?

The April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA* identified issues requiring attention. These issues ranged from general (like the need for greater consistency and quality in safeguarding practice) to specific calls to action (such as the need for a clear position on responses to disclosures of abuse). A summary of the key findings of the April 2019 Review is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of key findings in the April 2019 Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA

| Issue | Descriptive quote |
|---|---|
| Safeguarding practice – consistency and quality | <i>“[We] have found that, despite the very substantial expenditure of safeguarding related funds, the Church cannot provide any guarantee of consistency and quality in safeguarding practice across all of its ministry areas.” (p. 3)</i> |
| Risk and policy | <i>“... waste from this system has an adverse impact beyond the policy sphere. For example, we note that the national database is severely compromised and of very limited intel value. This has significant adverse implications in terms of case management oversight, as well as for the Church’s safeguarding-related risk assessment, research and abuse prevention activities.” (p. 3)</i> |
| Planning and resource allocation | <i>“We also note that the very substantial annual expenditure on safeguarding activities hasn’t been executed in a planned and coordinated manner across the Church. One consequence of the lack of any overarching resource mapping and planning process is inadequate safeguarding support for many areas of Church ministry requiring this type of assistance.” (p. 3)</i> <i>“[Change] needs to be executed in such a way as to enhance and support local initiatives. Once again, tapping into local expertise should result in a better utilisation of resources.” (p. 44)</i> |
| Leadership | <i>“We recognise that our proposal requires members of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Religious Australia, the Association of Public Juridic Persons, and leaders of other Catholic social and educational services, to come together as one for the purpose of creating an integrated national system. We have argued that a collective commitment of this kind is vital to the Church’s mission to protect and serve those who are vulnerable.” (p. 53)</i> |

Source: April 2019 Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA

Key findings from the ICPS consultations

The ICPS consultations confirmed the above-mentioned issues. Informants revealed there was no guarantee of consistency and quality in safeguarding practice across the diverse range of Catholic Entities. Although ICPS found instances of evidence-informed practice, this approach was not universal. Many institutions required increased support. Support was not only needed in relation to safeguarding and professional standards but also to address observed deficiencies in risk assessment (frameworks, processes, tools, data sets), communications and change management to meet the Royal Commission's call for culture change. Enhanced support, coordination and guidance for quality safeguarding and professional standards implementation was needed to promote greater consistency, ensure practice aligns with the NCSS over time, and enhance the efficient use of resources.

The ICPS consultations confirmed that risk and policy knowledge was underdeveloped. Many Catholic Entities lacked evidence-informed, strategic advice. Coordinated information collection, storage and analysis that informs policy development and guides the identification and provision of required strategic supports to or within Church Authorities was often limited. Reliable and coordinated efforts at data collection and analysis would enhance risk assessments, planning and strategic decision making across the Church. Forward planning for future developments in regulatory requirements was identified as particularly important.

There was a lack of planning and coordination in resource allocation. There was inconsistency in terms of the focus of resources (the structures) on prevention (i.e., 'safeguarding'), and responding (i.e., managing allegations, providing compensation, etc.). The cost-effective implementation of safeguarding practice has not been achieved as a result of inconsistent resource allocation. Enhanced oversight through one national body would guide efficiency in the allocation of resources, with the potential for greater effectiveness from a fit-for-purpose national body.

Budget revisions appeared to have resulted in a loss of focus on the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Future efforts at planning and coordination in resource allocation need to balance the need for efficiencies with the need for ongoing action on the Royal Commission recommendations.

Further, the analysis revealed insufficient opportunities for informed and coordinated decision making and planning at a national level. For instance, the lack of any overarching safeguarding resource mapping and planning process has contributed to inconsistent approaches to safeguarding. Some Church Authorities have struggled to implement evidence-informed safeguarding systems and processes.

Consistent communications about safeguarding is also an issue. For example, when the media reports a safety concern at a Catholic Entity, or new historical allegations are revealed, there is no high-level coordinated, consistent, official approach to communications about the commitment of the Church to safeguarding. Such a communication could acknowledge past failures, including the harm caused by systemic and institutional failures, and demonstrate the coordinated efforts underway to both address the issue of the moment and realise culture change across the Church.

The NCSS provide a powerful framework to guide the work of leaders. Endorsed by the ACBC and CRA, the NCSS represent a significant and critically important act of leadership in the Church. In commissioning CPSL to develop these standards, ACBC and CRA delivered a road map for necessary reform across the Church.

Ongoing, consistent and effective leadership is required to drive the implementation of the NCSS; along with culture change to maintain compliance. While progress in implementation has been generally good, there are inconsistencies in outcomes and some concerning gaps. Lack of resources was often cited as the reason for gaps. Poor leadership was also a factor. If a Church Authority does not actively support the implementation of the NCSS, there was no timely oversight or accountability.

The IAG Governance Review Project team is also exploring co-responsible governance and management, with greater involvement of the people of God with the ordained. This is consistent with the Royal Commissions' call for greater involvement of lay people, and with the call from Pope Francis who stated on 20 August 2018, in his [Letter to the People of God](#):

It is impossible to think of a conversion of our activity as a Church that does not include the active participation of all the members of God's People. Indeed, whenever we have tried to replace, or silence, or ignore the People of God to small elites, we end up creating communities, projects, theological approaches, spiritualities and structures without roots, without memory, without faces, without bodies and ultimately, without lives.... (p.3)

Both this and the 2019 review confirm the importance of timely oversight of progress in implementation of the NCSS. Such oversight demonstrates a commitment to the safety and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable persons. It supports the accountability and transparency around the implementation of the NCSS in the present day.

3.3. Implications for required safeguarding and professional standards systems and structures

This section reflects on the implications of the findings on the needs, opportunities and challenges in safeguarding and professional standards service provision across Catholic Entities. It presents the processes (or ways of working) and operating principles required to address needs, capitalise on opportunities and mitigate challenges.

Ways of working

Data analysis identified that any new operating model must support improvements to the following:

- Governance, leadership and accountability
- Capacity building and strategic advice
- Coordination
- Compliance and controls
- Engagement and learning.

The intent is for the National Office to provide guidance and support and for Church Authorities and Catholic Entities to drive the change.

Governance, leadership and accountability

The Church needs an operating model that enables effective governance, leadership and accountability. Key elements identified during the mapping exercise include:

- Achieving a whole-of-Church commitment to good governance through leadership that is inclusive and engages the laity
- Building sound governance systems, tools, approaches and cultures across Catholic Entities
- Supporting and valuing the work of Church Authorities in their care for children, young people, and vulnerable persons
- Being accountable and having mechanisms in place to ensure the implementation of agreed standards.

These elements need to be cross-referenced against the work of the IAG Governance Review Project team.

Capacity-building and strategic advice

Capacity-building and strategic advice entails the use of evidence-based policy and practice for informed decision making. The Church needs an operating model that provides Church Authorities with timely evidence-based information on safeguarding and professional standards and supports personnel in the effective and efficient application of this information.

Coordination

Coordination is about ensuring safeguarding and professional standards service delivery is effective and efficient. Any proposed operating model must help ensure that the work of safeguarding is consistent so that the agreed performance standards are met.

Compliance and controls

Compliance and controls involve processes for consistently meeting required standards of performance and ensuring compliance with laws and regulations. The operating model must deliver compliance and controls in a manner that recognises the autonomy of Church Authorities.

Engagement and learning

A commitment to ongoing engagement and learning is required to ensure the ability to develop and improve expertise, support effective performance and enable adaptation to further changes including in the legislative and regulatory environment. The operating model must guide and support such engagement and learning opportunities.

Operating principles

Any operational model developed for safeguarding and professional standards within the Catholic Church must also demonstrate key operating principles. These are set out in Figure 2 below.

Together with the Safeguarding Steering Committee, ICPS developed these nine principles for design of a safeguarding and professional standards operational model for Catholic Entities in Australia. It needs to be effective, efficient, subsidiarity, collaborative, sustainable, educative, accountable, risk-based, and response.



Figure 2. Design principles for operational model

4. Proposed operational model

4.1. A National Office

Catholic Safeguarding Australia (or the National Office) is proposed to oversee three operational areas critical to effective and efficient safeguarding and professional standards systems and standards across the Catholic Entities. Depicted in Figure 3, these operational areas are:

- Risk management
- Capacity building and survivor support
- Standards, compliance and complaints.

The April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA* canvassed several options for national oversight of safeguarding and professional standards in the Catholic Church in Australia. One option included modifying the existing office and board of CPSL. The Committee wanted to build on this option. It sought an operational model that adapts the current structure of CPSL to realise a more unified, consistent, efficient approach to safeguarding and professional standards in the future.

The Committee also sought a model responsive to current and emerging legislative and regulatory requirements. Following full implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission, faith-based institutions will be bound by the same regulatory obligations as civil entities including reporting obligations to state and territory civil authorities. Thus, the Committee sought an operational model that avoided unnecessary duplication of compliance activities and accomplished appropriate systems of risk management oversight (but proportionate to risk of the ministry and activities undertaken by different entities).

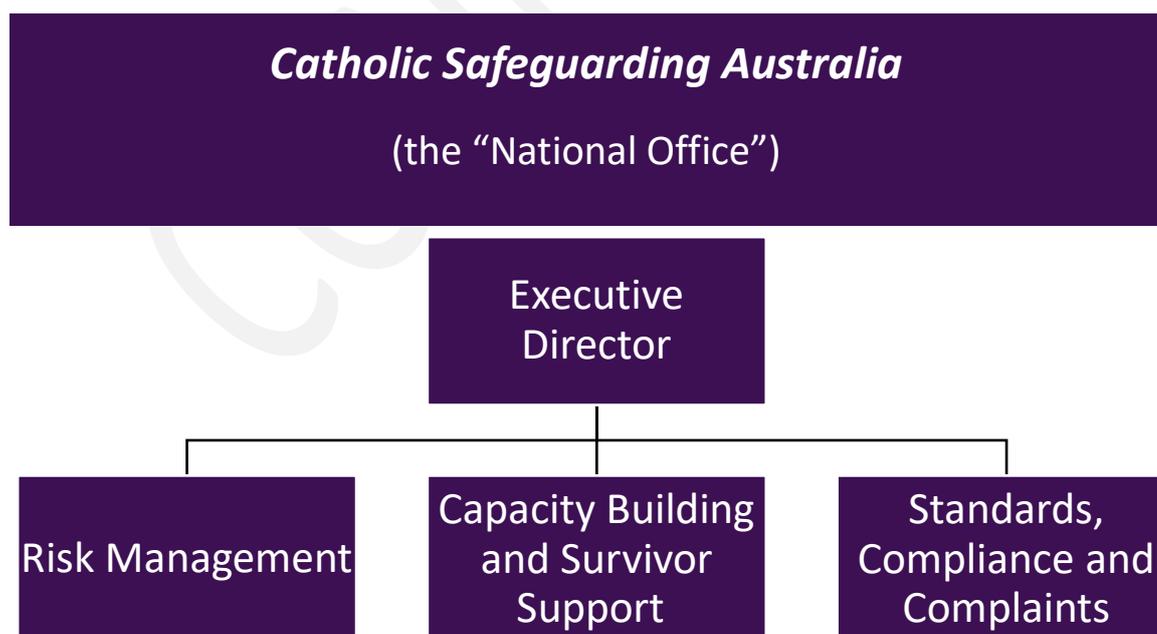


Figure 3. Functional or operational areas of the proposed National Office

The National Office will assume the responsibilities of the ACCPS (including the future maintenance of the Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR)) and CPSL. It could also take on any outstanding tasks of the IAG once the IAG has completed its mission.

The model has been developed in the context not only of the specific recommendation of the Royal Commission, but in recognition of the need for cultural change. The National Office will support Church Authorities to continue their journey to drive culture change.

The National Office will facilitate and build capacity to enact good practice; to support the building and maintenance of cultures that are open and accountable, prevention-focused, and supportive of victim-survivors. However, the National Office will not have a role in direct case-management or service delivery: this will remain the function of Church Authorities. The model is designed to equip, enable and enhance the effectiveness of Church Authorities to make prevention and responses to harm a top priority and core business for all ministries working with children, young people, and vulnerable persons.

National Office structure

An experienced team will be required to run the National Office. This team should include an Executive Director, technical staff for each of operational areas and supporting staff in professional and administrative roles.

The Executive Director will provide leadership, coordination and oversight of all the operational areas. Each operational area will require clear strategic plans and processes. The Executive Director should retain a key focus on the implementation of the recommendations from the Royal Commission, as they relate to the Catholic Church, and emerging legislative and regulatory requirements.

The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring open communication with and effective, timely and accountable support to Church Authorities. The National Office will build relationships through the authority of its mandate, the quality of its work and reciprocity through its advice and support – exchanging knowledge and resources for mutual benefit.

Several administrative staff will support the Executive Director. The proposed roles include a Communications Officer (0.6 FTE), Finance / Human Resource Management Officer (0.6 FTE) and a full-time Administration Officer / Executive Assistant.

4.2. Legal status and governance of the National Office

The National Office should be based substantively on the corporate structure adopted for CPSL.

Like CPSL, the Members of the Company of the National Office should be ACBC and CRA. AMPJP should be invited to become an additional member. The existing CPSL constitution allows for additional entities to be admitted as Members. Other prospective members may include the National Catholic Education Commission, Catholic Healthcare and Catholic Social Services.

The Board of Directors of the Company will be responsible to the Members for strategic and policy direction, the finances and the operation of the National Office.

The arguments that underpinned the creation of an independent board of laypeople for CPSL remain. Consistent with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, it is critical that women and men with appropriate professional expertise provide leadership. Areas of expertise should include risk management, change management, corporate governance and planning, canon law, child protection, safeguarding and regulation.

In the light of the Royal Commission recommendations, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and the NCSS, consideration must be given to how the views and wishes of children, young people, and vulnerable persons can be heard on the Board. There are several ways that this could be achieved:

- Member positions could be occupied by members who have lived experiences and/or expertise in working with and for these target groups.
- Reference groups could be established to provide information and insight to the Board on specific issues relating to children, young people, and vulnerable persons.
- Board members with the necessary skills and networks could be tasked with regularly consulting and presenting the views of these groups to the Board.
- Targeted reference groups and/or regular structured consultative processes could also be used.

4.3. Key operational areas within the national office

Below is a description of the three operational areas of the National Office: (a) Risk Management, (b) Capacity Building and Survivor Support, and (c) Standards, Compliance, and Complaints.

Risk Management

Roles and responsibilities

The National Office will be responsible for providing advice to Catholic Authorities and Entities on safeguarding risks. It will support the development of risk management capability in Catholic Authorities and Entities.

Initially, the National Office must conduct a needs assessment – determine what data needs to be collected and the means for collecting and storing it. The imperative is to source data that enables continuous review and improvement of safeguarding practices. Aggregate complaints data, for instance, would help the office identify potential hotspots of alleged abuse and identify the types of individuals / groups at risk. Such a review aligns with the Royal Commission recommendation for a national risk register. The April 2019 *Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding Arrangements for the ACBC CRA* also emphasised the need for national oversight of complaints data.

To save costs and ensure appropriate data collection and information sharing across the Church, the needs assessment should look to protocols, procedures and practices of existing key stakeholder, regulator and oversight bodies. Opportunities may exist to:

- mirror core data fields used by the key regulatory/oversight bodies;
- enter into data sharing arrangements including, but not limited to, transferring regulators' data holdings relating to past Church matters via data migration processes; and
- gain access to existing performance reporting tools and reporting measures.

The needs assessment should also examine the reasons for non-compliance with existing data collection requirements within the Church⁷. Causes of non-compliance can inform efforts to avoid or minimise the past problems or concerns and develop and implement systems that deliver meaningful and relevant de-identified, aggregate data for informed decision making and planning.

The Risk Management operational area will enable the National Office to:

- ensure the collection of reliable data from available sources and conduct informed analysis that includes trends in claims, complaints, compliance, risks and environments
- guide and inform the development of risk-based policies, advice on risk-control strategies, procedures, communications and other strategic supports.

To do this, the National Office must be invested with authority by data holders to ensure that:

- data (as identified through a needs assessment) are shared with appropriate respect for privacy and confidentiality and collected with confidence about accuracy and completeness
- privacy standards are applied with consistency.

Where possible and appropriate, the Risk Management area should collaborate with the Research Office of ACBC. The Research Office's experience collecting data for the Royal Commission is particularly pertinent to the above-mentioned needs assessment and the development of data collection, management and analysis protocols.

⁷ 'In relation to the existing national database for matters dealt with under Towards Healing ... various Catholic Entities have 'voted with their feet' by their failure to utilise the existing IT system. This failure to use the database in relation to cases of abuse is not just about non-compliance with data entry requirements... it is also a direct consequence of non-compliance with requirements under Towards Healing and the Melbourne Response. This illustrates the critical need for the Church to develop a national set of principles, policies and procedures for dealing with concerns of abuse, that are adopted across all relevant Church ministry and service settings.' (April 2019 Review of Catholic Church Safeguarding arrangements for the ACBC CRA, p. 25)

Current approach to data, risk and policy within the Church and the case for change

Risk management is largely decentralised at present. There is no overarching policy or advice for Church Authorities, Religious Institutes and Catholic Entities. Consultations suggest that this approach has contributed to a divide within the Church. Typically, well-resourced entities have access to quality data and are using that data to inform risk controls or risk-mitigation strategies. Entities with fewer resources are comparatively less advanced in data and risk management.

Present arrangements contribute to inconsistent safeguarding practice. Some entities demonstrate good practice (e.g., track completion of required safeguarding training and follow up with those who haven't attended) others do not (e.g., have some awareness of poor training completion rates but have no process for following up non-completion).

Ongoing capacity building efforts (led or supported by the capacity building operational area) will help ensure more consistent approaches to safeguarding. Action to address short-comings or issues identified through the recommended needs assessment will also help improve consistency.

Even with these actions the Church still has no independent assessment of its risk profile and key areas of risk. The establishment of Risk Management area helps address this knowledge gap. The work of this area will keep the Members alert to risk exposures, the effectiveness of risk management frameworks and the need for ongoing review of key policies that support frameworks for managing risk.

As a guide to the possible role of the National Office, it can also play a coordinating role in relation to data between entities. It would function in a similar way to existing national agencies for information sharing, or the reporting arms of established peak bodies. For instance, the [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare \(AIHW\)](#) works to establish data standards and reporting on collated de-identified data including on sensitive issues. This aggregated non-identifiable data is used to provide a national picture, to help identify good practice and areas for further reform and support greater collaboration between responsible authorities. The [Australian Council for International Development \(ACFID\)](#) collects data on the activities of Australian non-government organisations involved in international development and humanitarian action and presents it on an annual basis to demonstrate accountability. [The methodologies of such bodies could inform the work of this operational area.](#)

Staffing requirements

A full-time Coordinator is required to manage the Risk Management operational area. Their key main responsibility is oversight of risk. Using available data (identified through a needs assessment), they will identify risks and make recommendations to the Executive Director on mitigation strategies. The Coordinator will also use their expertise to support capacity building efforts related to:

- Designing, defining and building risk frameworks, risk management policies and practices, controls and risk profiles relevant for adoption across Church Authorities
- Supporting the implementation of risk processes, risk management analysis and reporting
- Effectively embedding risk culture, processes and disciplines.

Reporting to the Risk Management Coordinator, the Database and Analytics Officer is responsible for all aspects of the data collection and management (pending the needs assessment that explores data already held, data collected by government, and comparable data collections). Key responsibilities include information integrity, privacy database maintenance, reporting, and servicing the training and reporting needs of Catholic Entities. The Database and Analytics Officer will most likely work closely with their counterparts at the Research Office of the ACBC.

Capacity Building and Survivor Support

The National Office will be responsible for assisting Church Authorities to operate at the highest standards of performance and attainment in safeguarding and professional standards. Its role is to provide information and undertake support activities that advance this goal. Through the provision of timely education and advice the National Office will build the capacity of Church Authorities to apply the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, meet their auditing obligations and create safe environments.

The National Office will provide learning opportunities and create opportunities for peer learning. Examples of potential opportunities include online 'communities of practice' and online advice forums. Supporting communities of practice is an efficient and effective way to bring peers together to share their successes and challenges in safeguarding and professional standards service delivery.

Ongoing collaboration with Church Authorities, as well as individual Catholic Entities will be critical. Collaboration (along with regular reviews of the findings of the Risk Management function) will enable the National Office to prioritise projects that address the information needs and practice issues of the bodies they service. Identified projects must build and enhance the capacity of Church Authorities to create and maintain safe environments for all with whom they serve.

The National Office will remain abreast of developments in canon law as well as legislation and regulatory regimes across all states and territories in Australia. Information about developments must be shared promptly to ensure Church Authorities can adopt and respond to relevant laws, regulations and compliance regimes. A key coordinative function of the National Office will therefore be to assist Church Authorities by monitoring changes to canon law along with national and state legislation and civil regulatory schemes, and then sharing information about changes to improve understandings within Church Authorities of the implications of and appropriate responses to change (i.e., a clearinghouse function).

Table 2 details key areas where the National Office is anticipated to build capacity.

Table 2. Areas of capacity building to be provided by the National Office

| Area of support | Description |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Internal stakeholder consultations | <p>Building and enhancing capacity to keep children, young people, and vulnerable persons and their families and carers informed about and involved in safeguarding activities</p> <p>Supporting the establishment of communities of practice where entities share knowledge, perspectives and experience to deepen understandings of their obligations under NCSS and other state/territory-based quality and safeguarding arrangements</p> |
| Learning and professional development | <p>Identifying shared learning and professional development needs and providing education and training, directly or indirectly (e.g., delivering training and/or commissioning third-party training providers to design and deliver training, as required)</p> |
| Communications | <p>Generating creativity and enthusing others within the Church to seek out, develop and refine content for communications about adopted evidence-informed safeguarding and professional standards practice</p> <p>Supporting the design and delivery of communications channels, such as staff intranets, monthly newsletters etc.</p> |
| Human resource management policy | <p>Providing support and advice on some specifics of human resource management functions that play an important role in protecting children, young people, and vulnerable persons from harm, including screening, recruitment and ongoing performance review</p> |
| Policy and practice development | <p>Providing expertise in shaping policy and practice in professional standards and safeguarding to promote a safe environment for children, young people, and vulnerable persons</p> |

The National Office will also focus on developing evidence-based policy and practice guidelines regarding the ongoing engagement, participation and support of victim-survivors of abuse. This work must be informed by victim-survivors and the findings of the Royal Commission and the Truth Justice and Healing Council and current/emerging research. This work will help reinforce that responses to abuse extend beyond the management of an allegation or complaint or an interaction with Australian Catholic Redress Limited (ACRL) or the National Redress Scheme. Responses must support victim-survivors to minimise further harm and incorporate pastoral care. The National Office will support efforts of Church Authorities to reconcile with survivors and restore their trust.

Current approach to capacity building and survivor support within the Church

The approaches or strategies adopted by Church Authorities—including those by individual Dioceses, Religious Institutes and Catholic Entities, and coordinative mechanisms that have evolved such as state professional standards offices that work across entities—to safeguarding and professional standards performance requirements vary considerably. Some bodies employ officers and make them responsible for promoting safety through the implementation of policies and activities to prevent, respond to and report concerns regarding abuse. Other bodies seek advice and support, as needed. For example, a Religious Institute reviews, refines and implements safeguarding policies originally developed by a Diocese. This same Religious Institute contracts independent legal representation in response to a complaint. Religious Institutes also reported seeking support from civil authorities, like an Ombudsman, as required. Some Church Authorities have joined communities of practice to collectively review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping children, young people, and vulnerable persons safe. Partnerships either happened organically (without apparent effort or planning) or at the direct request of a leader (e.g., a Bishop requesting their Safeguarding Unit work with Religious Institutes in the diocese and Religious Institutes joining together to plan for and deliver safeguarding activities).

Varying standards of performance and attainment regarding safeguarding and professional standards were observed. While well-resourced entities typically demonstrated higher standards of performance and attainment, leadership was a pivotal determination of the level of functioning. Safeguarding and professional standards representatives of Church Authorities that lacked strong leadership largely reacted to issues and challenges as they arose rather than managing them proactively. They spoke of low levels of interest in safeguarding from leaders and a need to 'deliver safeguarding under the radar'. National Child Protection Week represented a rare occasion where they felt comfortable and supported to discuss and address the prevention of and responses to harm and abuse.

The creation of CPSL affected entities differently. For many the NCSS and supporting materials helped to advance their efforts to deliver safeguarding and professional standards services. Even so, they remain hopeful of more resources (e.g., policy templates; materials to support delivery of training in local areas or individual entities; practical guidance) that they can adapt and deploy. For others, the standards and supporting materials were more affirming of their existing practice.

The creation of a new national capacity building support function is about putting in place a structure focused solely on building on and enhancing performance and attainment in safeguarding and professional standards by Church Authorities, consistent with subsidiarity. Prioritising national oversight and coordination in this way signals a culture dedicated to improvements in safeguarding and professional standards service delivery.

Inconsistencies in approaches to survivor support, engagement, and care were also observed. For instance, some bodies (for varying reasons) have not joined the National Redress Scheme to date. Consequently, some victim-survivors will have limited to no advance notice of how their claim for redress will be managed. ICPS also heard of some Church Authorities providing all victim-survivors with flexible counselling and psychological care throughout their life and others applying limits to the type of counselling and psychological care on offer. The key point being that there is presently no system-level guidance around evidence-informed care provided to victim-survivors.

The National Office can lead and have oversight of evidence-based policy and practice guidelines for sensitive, high quality and trauma informed responses to victim-survivors of abuse. Further, the placement of the survivor support within the National Office will highlight the importance of ongoing engagement, participation and support of victim-survivors of abuse.

Staffing requirements

A full-time Coordinator will manage the Capacity Building and Survivor Care operational area of the National Office. Key roles and responsibilities include:

- working with Church Authorities to identify capacity building initiatives that support the highest standards of performance and attainment in safeguarding and professional standards across individual entities
- collaborating with the Risk Management operational area to ensure the collection, reporting and interpretation of data that informs the design of capacity building initiatives
- remaining abreast of emerging developments in law / regulatory regimes across all jurisdictions in Australia.

A Training Support Officer (0.8 FTE) will assist with the identification and delivery of capacity building initiatives. For example, the design of a suite of resources like templates or online training materials that can be adapted for local conditions. The Training Officer may also undertake train-the-trainer work.

A Survivor Support Research Officer (0.8 FTE) will be responsible for leading the analysis and dissemination of research findings about the pastoral care and material support for victim-survivors of abuse in institutional settings. As appropriate, the Officer may engage with representative groups of victim-survivors to inform and shape Church policy and strategy in relation to pastoral care and material support.

Standards, compliance and complaints

The Standards, Compliance, and Complaints operational area is responsible for developing / maintaining safety standards for children, young people, and vulnerable persons – and having oversight of compliance with those standards. Depending on the mechanism identified in IAG’s proposed National Response Protocol, the National Office could also respond to and manage complaints against Church Authorities (tasks currently undertaken by ACCPS) and appeals/reviews of complaint handling by an entity (excluding those managed by the National Redress Scheme or in the civil courts).

The Standards, Compliance, and Complaints operational area will be responsible for the existing NCSS and the work in-progress to develop vulnerable persons standards. They will conduct reviews and maintain the NCSS to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Maintenance efforts will include seeking feedback from entities about the relevance and practicality of the standards and proposing and implementing revisions, as appropriate. The National Office will also monitor the design and delivery of comparable standards developed by Australian Governments (e.g., the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations) and revise the NCSS, as required, to ensure consistency. The National Office will finalise the draft vulnerable persons standards and test them with Church entities and victim-survivors of abuse and their families and other relevant stakeholders. Once finalised, the National Office will maintain the standards following the processes described for the NCSS.

The NCSS and in-progress standards for vulnerable persons should guide the safeguarding work of the Catholic Church. The National Office will act as advocates for the standards as clear statements by and to the Catholic and the broader community of the commitment to safeguarding and to the safety and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable persons. Standards will guide and support the accountability and transparency for Church Authorities.

The National Office will need to ensure that other Church Authority documents (such as the in-progress IAG National Response Protocols) inform their work, as appropriate.

The National Office’s compliance function entails overseeing and coordinating the results of an audit process designed to ensure entities meet the NCSS. Rather than conduct the audit, the National Office will advise entities about options for engaging and working with independent auditors.

The National Office will also have some oversight over and involvement in complaints management. The National Office will be responsible for developing and maintaining policy, principles and procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against Church Leaders. It will manage allegations involving Church Authorities i.e., a Diocesan Bishop (or Archbishop), the Australian Major Superior in respect of religious institutes and the canonical steward in relation to other Catholic Entities not mentioned. The National Office could also assume responsible for managing appeals / reviews in cases (excluding those handled through the National Redress Scheme or civil courts) where any party to an allegation expresses concern that errors were made in decision making about the proposed or actual response.

Current approach to standards, compliance, and complaints

Along with each Church Authority, CPSL is currently responsible for maintaining standards across Catholic Entities. They have already developed the NCSS and are developing similar standards for vulnerable persons. Most of the feedback provided to us about the NCSS was positive. CPSL has also translated these into an audit framework, based on indicators they have developed that are tailored to suit the risk environment and nature of services provided by different Catholic Entities. However, some expressed concern about the number of indicators that apply to entities with no contact with children or young people. Consequently, the abovementioned approach is largely about continuing and refining the standards work established by CPSL and the adoption of transparent review processes (considering feedback from entities and the introduction of, or changes to, standards enacted by different jurisdictions and levels of government across Australia).

CPSL are also currently responsible for conducting and publishing findings from audits of Catholic Entities against the NCSS, using the indicators set out in their audit framework. ICPS received mixed feedback on the CPSL audit program. Some entities praised the audit approach, particularly the support and assistance they had received from the audit team. Others expressed concerns about the costs of the audit ('too expensive'), the appropriateness of the indicators to their service type (and level of risk), perceived inexperience of the assigned auditors and a lack of support post-audits ('an audit report represents the start of the [continuous improvement] journey ... naming and shaming [via the online publication of audit findings] is pointless'). Overwhelmingly informants questioned the independence of CPSL as auditors. No one raised doubts about the skills and expertise overall of the CPSL Board and its oversight, rather concerns remained about its capacity to provide an impartial review, given it is funded by and accountable to the Church (i.e., the members). Alternatives were proposed including the use of external auditors, and relying on civil regulation (e.g., for many entities – there are separate auditing processes that include (but are often broader than) safeguarding).

Given concerns about the auditing approach, the proposal is for the National Office to assume responsibility for coordinating an ongoing (evolving) audit framework, and then support Catholic Entities to identify and appoint external auditors. A panel of approved external auditors will help ensure independent auditing against available standards. Once established, entities would be responsible for arranging audits by approved external auditor/s. A function of the new National Office could be to establish approval processes for auditors or identify a suitable externally driven approval process.

Current approaches to complaints management vary. The ICPS consultations suggested that many entities (principally dioceses and eparchies, rather than religious institutes) rely on state/territory-based Directors of Professional Standards to implement the protocols and procedures of Towards Healing for complaints of abuse. Some entities run their own (separate) professional standards offices. Others engage external lawyers / legal teams, as required, and to varying costs.

Although beyond our project scope to identify the consequences of the varied approach to complaints, our consultations suggested reasonable levels of expertise and/or confidence are required to manage complaints at the level of a specific entity. The ‘gap’ or challenge for entities related to the suitability of existing procedures and protocols for responding to complaints of abuse. Thus, it is recommended that the National Office take on responsibility for collaboratively maintaining (including revising or re-developing) complaint-management standards (in accordance with recommendations from the IAG on a National Response Protocol). The use of complaints-management standards is intended to support the development of consistent practice. Over time, monitoring processes and the audit findings will inform assessments of implementation of the standards.

Staffing requirements

A full-time Coordinator is required to oversee this function. Key roles and responsibilities include:

- continuous improvement of the NCSS and development of standards for working with, and ministry to, vulnerable persons
- establishment of a process for an externally conducted audit program and then oversight of that program
- continuous improvement of complaints-handling standards
- coordination of responses to allegations / complaints involving Church Authorities and requests for appeals / reviews.

The Coordinator would engage independent persons with relevant legal, risk management, case management and investigative expertise to respond to allegations / complaints involving Church Authorities and requests for appeals / reviews.

Due to the sensitive nature of the role, the staff would need to have access to:

- mentors/peers for debriefing and support
- regular formal clinical supervision
- independent external legal advice (both civil and canon law).

4.4. Rationale and purpose for the new National Office

Many Church Authorities and Catholic Entities have responded to the Royal Commission by strengthening processes. Significant structures are now in place. Many Church Authorities are clearly taking responsibility for safeguarding structures and processes. Although much has been done, more is required, which is why the emphasis of the National Office should be on capacity building. Across Australia—at both state/territory and Commonwealth level—governments have responded by changing legislation, developing stronger safeguarding structures and, in so doing, they have made Church Authorities and Catholic Entities far more accountable to civil society. These changes will inevitably continue. This is the most appropriate front line of accountability for churches and other non-government entities in a post-Royal Commission era. A new entity that can provide national focus and play a coordinative and collaborative role would strengthen and enhance such civil society obligations.

Leadership is critical to an effective and efficient safeguarding model. So too is the establishment of such authority structures under Canon law. However, structural reform consistent with Canon law does not solve all the problems of governance regarding safeguarding. What is necessary is an internal disposition across all levels of leadership of Church Authorities and Entities. We caution that there is no perfect model. In reviewing national and international models, there is no research evidence to show that one model is manifestly superior to another. While the careful analysis ICPS has undertaken, with advice from the Safeguarding Steering Committee supports the proposed model (in terms of consistency with the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and other inquiries), it is only a proxy for achieving cultural change. As all youth-serving organisations across Australia are admonished to recognise, this is the crucial ingredient for safeguarding: having an open, inclusive, child-centred culture. To paraphrase Luke 17:2 – better the millstone be tied around our necks than to do anything less for the children and young people we serve across the vast array of Catholic Entities.

The principle of synodality can be used to overcome the limitations and risks within existing church hierarchies. Synodality is needed not just from episcopal leaders, but from all Catholic Entities and levels within the structures. Strategies are needed to support safeguarding efforts not just through the National Office, but in all entities such as pastoral councils that not only advise, but have a clear accountability function, and include lay and clergy, women and men, and the voice of children, young people, and vulnerable persons to whom and with whom they minister. Although Bishops, and congregational leaders have the authority and responsibility to create safeguarding bodies all can be involved and play a part. Synodality should be the *modus operandi* for all Church Authorities in providing safeguarding services.

Good governance must be exercised. For example, the Members of the proposed company forming the National Office will need to use appropriate governance processes to ensure they are kept updated regularly on the activities and direction of the National Office, and that the Board of Directors is fulfilling its task of keeping the National Office accountable to meet the needs of the Members, working to prioritise safeguarding standards consistent with its constitution and its mission.

The proposed operational model of a new single national office is designed to primarily function as a vehicle for capacity building within Church Authorities, and to assist where it is required. However, a proliferation of existing safeguarding entities and functions that sit outside of individual Church Authorities has occurred. The model proposed here capitalises on the opportunity that now exists to consolidate and realise these benefits internally and externally. As highlighted by the Royal Commission, there are external drivers for providing a national voice, and a single contact point for external engagement (from victim-survivors, governments and regulators). Internally, there is also a need for national oversight to identify and promote best practice, avoid duplication, and support information sharing when safeguarding strategies and functions are implemented at the Church Authority and local level (consistent with the principle of subsidiarity). Therefore, the prime function of the National Office will be to play an educative, support and compliance role for Church Authorities and individual entities.

As a priority, the National Office should lead a consultative, collaborative process with Church Authorities to articulate a framework for implementing the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) and the new National Protocols being developed by IAG, to guide the work of individual entities and Church Authorities. It should also extend to safeguarding and responses for vulnerable persons. Consistent with subsidiarity, Church Authorities can then develop local solutions, protocols and policies that are consistent with the overarching framework set by the NCSS, adopting a risk-based approach to their activities (e.g., contemplative Orders with no direct or sustained contact with children and young people may need to do little more than agree to the framework, and attest to their compliance with its provisions). A strong rationale for the activities, resources, and approaches that are adopted by the National Office are needed, and with the expectation that Church Authorities and individual entities collaborate in implementing efficient safeguarding practice and accountability, drawing together prevention and responses to the issue of harm to children, young people, and vulnerable persons. An implementation framework for the NCSS can help ensure best practice, without encouraging ‘overreach’ (e.g., entities who require all lay readers to have a ‘working with children’ check, despite it being out of scope for the scheme in their jurisdiction, and it may occur at the expense of good policy and protocol for supervision and accountability of staff and volunteers).

The model of a new National Office has been developed in the context not only of the specific recommendation of the Royal Commission, but in recognition of the need for cultural change in all organisations that serve children, young people and vulnerable persons – including the Catholic Church in Australia. The recommendations provided below should be considered in the light of the current review of governance of dioceses and parishes in the Catholic Church in Australia.

The focus of the proposed single office, to operate nationally, is to drive culture change, provide leadership, and enhance communication and accountability externally (for Governments, and the broader community to see a united and coherent voice for safeguarding issues and professional standards in Catholic Church Entities across Australia) and internally (within and between Church Authorities). Consistent with the advice and recommendations of the Royal Commission, the proposed model will not in and of itself create a safety net and improve prevention of abuse and responses to abuse; rather it is about creating a new office that can equip and support Church Authorities to continue on their journey and drive culture change within their members/entities.

This will involve leaders within each Church Authority taking responsibility, communicating and supporting new ways of working, and enacting strategies consistent with their nature of ministry to children, young people and vulnerable persons. The proposal for a new National Office is intended to be consistent with Pope Francis’ establishment within Vatican City of a central office to provide practical guidance to Dicasteries of the Roman Curia and Institutions connected to the Holy See – and his call to all Conferences of Bishops globally (see: *Motu Proprio* 26 March 2019). His guidelines apply equally to all who serve children, young people and vulnerable persons, and so in the Australian context, it is appropriate that this covers the diverse ministries of ACBC, CRA, and AMPJP. This guidance must be directed equally to prevention strategies (how to protect children, young people, and vulnerable persons from harm in the first place), the responses to those who have or do suffer harm, and the accountability and responses to those who have been accused of engaging in abuse/harmful behaviour – and those to who manage or are accountable for their service or ministry.

As highlighted by the Royal Commission, the culture of individual organisations and systems can be problematic in two ways: (a) resisting fast detection of child sexual abuse, and (b) discouraging effective responses when abuse does occur. To address these, culture change means recognising issues and adopting strategies that are child-centred, victim/survivor-focused, open, and accountable. Such issues include:

- Referring all alleged perpetrators to external secular authorities for investigation
- Recognising the needs of victim/survivors over that of the public image (and potential legal consequences)
- Recognising and promoting the rights and dignity of children, young people, and vulnerable persons
- Breaking down patterns of secrecy
- Promoting children and young people's engagement in activities and behaviours that make abuse less likely, and reporting of any harm that may still occur
- Overcoming sexist cultures (often based on gender-imbalanced authority structures)
- Fostering open discussion of matters relating to sexuality, sexual development, and child sexual abuse
- Breaking down hierarchal management cultures (see: Palmer, 2016).

The National Office will be a key instrument to inform Church Authorities in matters relating to the above, and to encourage, facilitate and build capacity to enact good practice to support the building and maintenance of positive cultures that are open and accountable, prevention-focused, and supportive of survivor-victims.

5. Reaching a more cost-effective model

While Church Authorities want effective safeguarding and professional standards practices, cost is a key consideration for the development of fit-for-purpose and sustainable safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Australia. Discussion of this issue also sits in a historical context (as outlined in section 2).

Many Church Authorities and Entities have been addressing safeguarding for a significant time building skills, experience and knowledge. This review focused on what is required at a national level to oversight and support this work. There have been several funded national bodies created at different times (see section 2.1). Each of these bodies has required committed funding contributions from key Church Authorities.

The passage of 10 years from the final Royal Commission report will be a landmark date for the development of safeguarding practice and policy in Australia. At this point there will be an evaluation review of progress in implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. During this 10-year period (and probably beyond) there will be a range of regulatory reforms that will be rolled out across Australian communities by governments that will impact the ministry and delivery of services by Catholic Church.

At the same time within the Catholic community, there will be learning and incorporation of new practices into standards and behaviour that should allow for a lighter touch in terms of education, training and supervision, regulation and reporting. Some of the functions of an effective safeguarding system for the Church will change in focus, scale and scope (and in some cases perhaps even the need to exist). So, the overall system must be flexible to adapt to these changes.

5.1. Available information on current costs

There has been considerable concern among Church Authorities at the accumulated operational costs. For the purpose of the current report we have examined the available information on the current costs of running these existing bodies. The information that we were able to obtain suggests current annual costs for existing entities has been around \$4–\$4.5 million.

There are significant limitations on the detail of the financial information, which impacts on our ability to make reliable estimates of future costs either for continuing bodies or for a notional future single body. During analysis of available data provided to ICPS, it was noted that:

- Past budgets for these bodies do not appear to have been closely monitored – particularly at a Global or national level.
- It is possible that budgets have sometimes been excessive or at least prepared without the necessary oversight or restraint.

- There is limited evidence of restraint in the separate and cumulative impact of expenditure in areas such as wages, director fees, consultancy fees, meeting costs and travel expenditure.
- There is evidence of duplication of functions and expenditure across bodies that would contribute to increased expenditure overall.

5.2. Estimated costs of the proposed operational model

ICPS have prepared a provisional budget (the Budget) based on the available information for organisations with comparable functions – advisory and oversight, analysis and advocacy and membership support. The budget has been prepared based on the required staffing and operational costs for the functions identified for the National Office and in consultation with the Peter Faber Business School at ACU.

The key costs in the Budget will be staffing and on-costs; rent; communications and technology; and Board costs. The Budget represents the costs of an established functional National Office.

The Budget does not include establishment or transitional costs. To identify transitional costs detailed financial and other data from the bodies affected in a move from several to one national office is required. As ICPS has not had access to this information costings will need to be undertaken by arrangement through the ACBC and CRA. It may require business consultants who can be provided with relevant commercial-in-confidence data to undertake their planning and recommend actions.

ICPS do anticipate that in the longer term, there will be cost savings from the proposed national structure and model in staffing and management costs, consolidation and optimisation in fixed and operating expenses such as rent, maintenance, insurance and communication, more focused scrutiny in areas such as Board costs and consultancies.

In addition, Church Authorities will be able to review the implications of this model for existing diocesan/provincial or state/territory office structures and identify cost savings (including through using template or recommended training materials and through support in monitoring civil regulatory requirements at national and state/territory level). More generally the proposed structure will allow for more overall scrutiny and planning for the ongoing costs for safeguarding.

Staffing

ICPS have drawn on indicative costs for the Executive Director⁸ and for staff⁹. The salary for the Executive Director is based on comparable pay in other equivalent not-for-profit entities. It may be necessary to be flexible in a recruitment approach (for this and the other senior management roles in the National Office) to attract (or retain a person) with the appropriate knowledge base, skill and demonstrated experience.

⁸ <https://www.hays.com.au/salary-guide/request-copy/index.htm>

⁹ https://staff.acu.edu.au/human_resources/working-here/pay-conditions-and-benefits/staff_salaries

ICPS used the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement for professional staff as the basis for the staffing costs. These costs reflect current market expectations as the Agreement has been recently negotiated. The costs will be similar to (or slightly higher than) the welfare/not-for-profit sector, but less generous than the public service or private sector.

ICPS have analysed the functions required for the National Office and aligned them with equivalent functions performed by positions under the Agreement and the Higher Education Industry Award 2010 guided by the scope of work and level of responsibility for each of the positions.

On-costs have been calculated to cover superannuation, long-service leave entitlements, payroll tax, etc. ICPS have used the figure of 25% in addition to base salary (which we note is more generous than other sectors in the higher superannuation contributions at 17% of base salary). There should also be additional scope for negotiating fringe benefits tax exemptions to improve the salary benefits.

The following is the proposed staffing structure and per annum costs for the National Office.

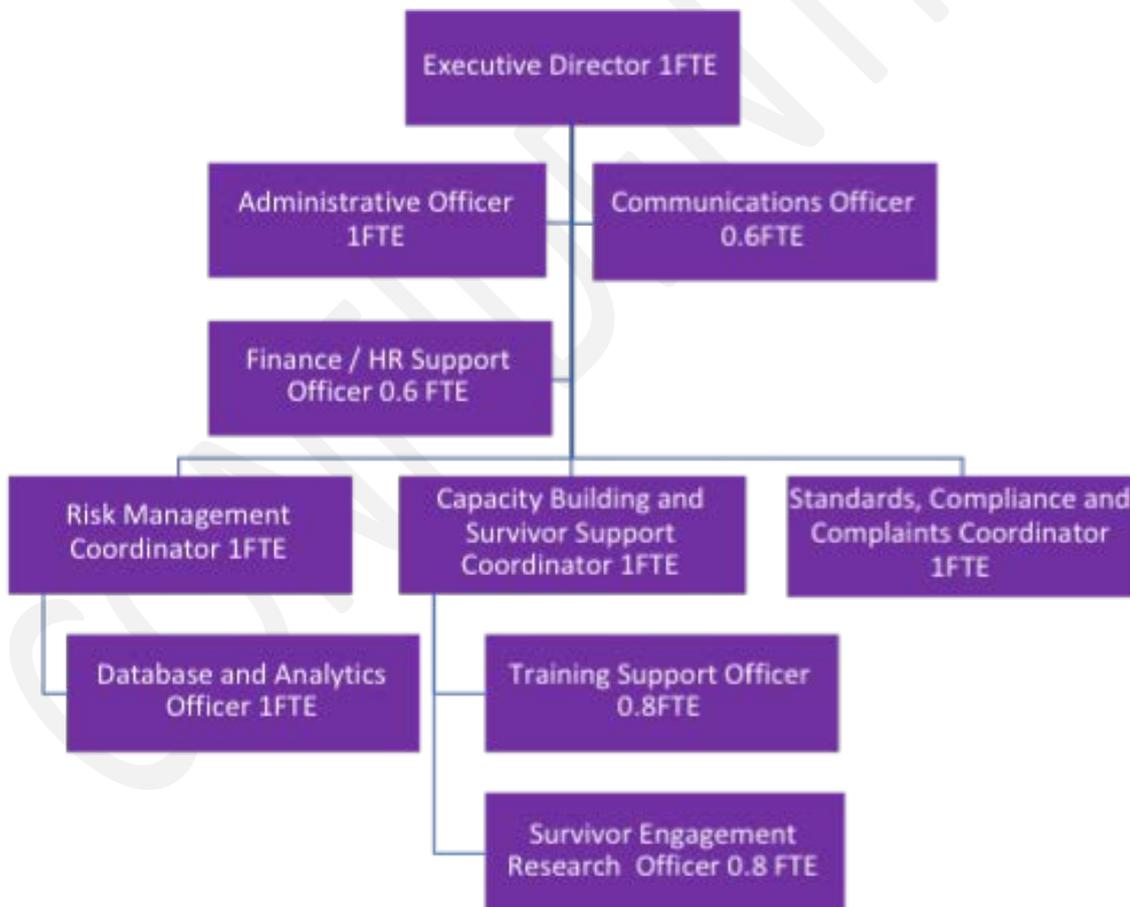


Figure 4. Proposed staffing structure for the National Office

Table 3. Staffing costs

| Staffing Costs | Award or Estimate | Award or Estimate | With On-Costs 25% ¹⁰ |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Executive Director | Charities Senior Executive | \$185,000 | \$231,250 |
| Administrative Officer | ACU Staff – Level 7.4 | \$94,321 | \$117,901 |
| Communications Officer | ACU Staff – Level 8.2 | \$60,610 | \$75,763 |
| Finance / HR Support Officer | ACU Staff – Level 7.4 | \$56,595 | \$70,744 |
| Risk Coordinator | ACU Staff -Level 10 | \$127,901 | \$159,876 |
| Capacity Building Coordinator | ACU Staff – Level 10 | \$127,901 | \$159,876 |
| Standards Coordinator | ACU Staff – Level 8.4 | \$108,660 | \$135,825 |
| Database Officer | ACU Staff – Level 8.4 | \$108,660 | \$135,825 |
| Training Support Officer | ACU Staff – Level 7.4 | \$75,457 | \$94,321 |
| Survivor Engagement Research Officer | ACU Staff – Level 7.4 | \$75,457 | \$94,321 |
| TOTAL STAFFING EXPENSES | | \$1,020,562 | \$1,275,702 |

Board of Directors

The area of remuneration of members of the Board of Directors and other Board costs does not appear to have been closely regulated for other existing national Catholic bodies.

To deliver on the model proposed here, it would be appropriate to broaden the base of the Board to draw in a wider skill set. In order to be responsive to the needs of Church Authorities (i.e., members), the board directors need to be accountable to, and use mechanisms for consultation with, the members of the company. However, this role will be undertaken in most circumstances through the advice from the National Office and the Executive Director. We would suggest that the Executive Director is an ex-officio member of the Board. On that basis of this approach to the governance of the Board, ICPS recommend that Board members should be paid sitting fees, rather than stipends or incomes, and travel costs, if required.

Guidance has been drawn from the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC):

<https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/guides/remunerating-charity-board-members>

¹⁰ Salary on-costs have been calculated using the following: 14.5% Superannuation; 5.9% Payroll Tax; 0.9% Workers Compensation; 2% Long service leave provision; and 1.7% Parental leave.

Rent

ICPS calculated rent with reference to rental costs for the city fringe of Melbourne. This location represents one of the cheaper metropolitan options, and a likely location given existing premises are occupied here by CPSL. Annual cost for office accommodation for the region is \$460 per m², (excl. GST) and outgoings passed on to tenants, typically pro rata costs of: rates (including water and sewerage), land tax, building insurance, repairs, and cleaning costs (excluding capital costs), management fees.

See: <https://www.commercialrealestate.com.au/advice/how-much-does-it-cost-to-rent-office-space-57245/> Allowing up to \$40 per m² for utilities brings the total to \$500 per m² per annum.

Using the Australian Government's target density rate of 14 m² of usable office area per occupied work-point for a staff head count of up to 10, this would mean space of approximately 150 m² = \$75,000 per year, excluding GST.

See: <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/property-construction/leased-office-accommodation/australian-government-office-occupancy-reports>

Savings could be achieved if staff of the National Office co-located with existing Catholic Entities (because the national team may well end up working at different sites across Australia) and discounted (or gratis) rent was available. While commercial shared office arrangements may look initially higher (e.g., for up to 10 people in East Melbourne this could cost around \$96,000 per annum), cost-savings on outgoings and utilities, and access to shared facilities like reception and access to other office equipment on a fee-per-use basis is likely to offset and may be more convenient should further savings be required and a suitable co-location arrangements made.

See: <https://www.rubberdesk.com.au/>

Operational Costs

Particular attention will be required to ensure good collaboration with other Catholic Entities. This will keep the database and technology system needs of the National Office within reasonable limits.

However, review of operational costs soon after establishment may be worthwhile in any event.

As discussed earlier the following proposed annual Budget for the National Office is based on the operational activity after establishment and transition. The costs of the establishment or transition will require separate attention.

Provisional annual budget for the National Office

Table 4. Provisional annual budget

| EXPENSES | |
|--|--------------------|
| Administration Costs | 325,000 |
| <i>Information technology</i> | 30,000 |
| <i>Insurance</i> | 15,000 |
| <i>Postage and courier</i> | 2,500 |
| <i>Printing and stationary</i> | 10,000 |
| <i>Recruitment</i> | 25,000 |
| <i>Publications</i> | 20,000 |
| <i>Communications</i> | 25,000 |
| <i>Database</i> | 100,000 |
| <i>Internal training</i> | 10,000 |
| <i>Travel (staff)</i> | 50,000 |
| <i>Training delivery</i> | 25,000 |
| <i>Interest paid</i> | |
| <i>Bank fees</i> | 2,500 |
| <i>Depreciation</i> | 10,000 |
| Staff Costs (see the staffing table above) | 1,360,702 |
| <i>Wages and salaries</i> | 1,020,562 |
| <i>Employment on-costs</i> | 255,140 |
| <i>Work cover premiums</i> | 15,000 |
| <i>Fringe Benefits Tax</i> | 25,000 |
| <i>Professional supervision</i> | 10,000 |
| <i>Staff-related costs – Other (relocation costs, staff amenities, etc.)</i> | 35,000 |
| Board Costs (see notes on Board of Directors) | 70,000 |
| <i>Director fees</i> | 50,000 |
| <i>Board travel and meetings</i> | 15,000 |
| <i>Directors' insurance</i> | 5,000 |
| Occupancy Costs (see the notes on rent) | 100,000 |
| <i>Rent</i> | 100,000 |
| Outsourced Costs | 110,000 |
| <i>Consultants and legal advice</i> | 80,000 |
| <i>Finance and payroll</i> | 15,000 |
| <i>External audit – finance</i> | 15,000 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$1,965,702 |

6. Transition planning

The proposed National Office brings together all the current national safeguarding and professional standards bodies into a single organisation to enhance oversight and coordination. If adopted, transition planning will be required to realise and embed a single national body.

The recommendations and ideas presented below point to very procedural or operational issues. Yet it will also be important to adopt a change-management approach to support this transition. Specialist change management and human resource management consultants are recommended to support staff through the proposed change. Examples of activities they may undertake include:

- Reviews of current job descriptions and revisions where necessary and the creation of new job descriptions for roles / positions not currently envisioned in the current set up
- Appraisals of current employment contracts for all staff affected by the transition process and support with the identification of future employment options or redundancy payments
- Development of position descriptions for all roles within the National Office
- Assessment of all fiscal and funding arrangements for existing entities and recommendations on the transfer of remaining and available funds to the new National Office (where appropriate)
- Recommendations on working arrangements such as whether the National Office needs to be physically housed in the one location, or whether remote working arrangements would support operations across diversified location (e.g., Directors of the National Office housed within a Catholic Entity).

The full scope of this change management advice, and the budget required, have not been costed as part of the scope of our advice.

CPSL is a not-for-profit public company limited by guarantee. Based on our preliminary investigations and data from our consultations, we propose that the National Office should also remain a not-for-profit public company limited by guarantee. Specialist corporate legal advice should be sought to confirm this as the most appropriate business structure. Unless this is agreed by ACBC, CRA and AMPJP, it is a risk to successful implementation. Initially the company's members would be: ACBC, CRA and AMPJP. To date the AMPJP has not been a member of most ACBC and CRA initiatives.

The following section provides advice on transitioning CPSL to become the organisational building block for the new National Office.

6.1. Transitioning CPSL to the National Office

We recommend that CPSL is re-branded, re-structured and re-focused to become the basis of the new National Office for Catholic Safeguarding Australia. The CPSL constitution will require revision but the underpinning corporate and legal structure remains sound. Appendix B includes some preliminary recommended changes to the constitution.

The existing CPSL Board of Directors could transition to the Board of Directors for the National Office. The CPSL Board of Directors serve a term of 3 years. At the conclusion of the term of each current Director, we propose a review to ensure the Board, as a collective, can demonstrate the required capability. Expertise in auditing and accreditation are particularly pertinent given the recommendation to outsource auditing processes.

6.2. Implications for other national safeguarding and professional standards bodies

The work of the other national safeguarding and professional standards bodies should be transferred to the National Office. Our proposal means that the National Office becomes responsible for ongoing and outstanding work of the CPSL, ACCPS and potentially any residual tasks from the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG).

The ACRL is a registered company with a specific specialist role to deal with matters the participating group of Catholic Church Diocesan entities (i.e., ACBC) delegated to the redress of victims and survivors of abuse – primarily historic cases of abuse. The Safeguarding Steering Committee has advised that ACRL not be integrated into the proposed National Office. ICPS appreciates this decision; however, we note that the ongoing functions of ACRL should be examined to ensure that they are performed with appropriate collaboration, communication and coordination with the National Office and its members, consistent with its obligations under the *National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018* and the *Privacy Act 1988*.

As noted, existing national bodies have their own staffing profiles, fiscal arrangements, and contractual obligations. These arrangements must be scrutinised further to support effective planning for any amalgamation. For instance, IAG may continue up to and including its current term of office. If so, we foresee that its work is handed to the National Office for finalisation and/or continuation, as appropriate.

6.3. Implications for other internal working groups

ACBC supports many working groups, committees or reporting functions that relate to safeguarding, child abuse, historical child abuse or risk management. Planning is needed to ensure the work of these groups and the National Office is complementary and coordinated. Every effort must be made to avoid ongoing duplication and to enable the National Office in its responsibility for the oversight and support for the implementation of the NCSS across entities. Responsibility for safeguarding and professional standards will continue to rest with Church Authorities. This recognises the work done to date and is consistent with the principle of subsidiarity.

6.4. Implications for state/territory and entity-based bodies

Current state professional standards offices have emerged historically in large part to deal with implementation of Towards Healing; however, they have since evolved to take on other responsibilities. But there is no consistency in their jurisdiction (i.e., how many dioceses they serve; whether they cover one or more state/territory; and whether or how they address the needs of other Catholic Entities). Consultations conducted by ICPS suggest that many stakeholders saw value in considering an ongoing role in implementation support to complement the work of an overarching national office. However, once the new protocol for claims management is finalised by

IAG (prior to transitioning into, or as part of the new National Office), Church Authorities may wish to review whether such offices continue to add value to their practice and operational efficiency of providing both preventative and responsive activities.

Once the National Office has commenced its role in identifying and supporting ‘communities of practice’, some or all the tasks currently undertaken by supra-entity organisations like state offices may not be needed. To the degree that collaborative clusters of local-level entities are helpful to support implementation, then they can continue where they are practical, and effective and do not duplicate services and supports from the National Office.

During our consultations, many stakeholders expressed the need for leadership and guidance on safeguarding and professional standards in different ways. State/territory Professional Standards Directors have been appointed and Safeguarding Directors and Officers operate in most diocese. Arguably with a consolidated National Office that integrates professional standards and safeguarding, the rationale for the maintenance of these jurisdictional offices is weakened, especially as many dioceses, congregations and Catholic agencies have developed their own approaches, consistent with the NCSS.

ACBC (and potentially CRA) should review the need for the continuance of these offices in the interests of consistency and the avoidance of duplication. Such a review should consider whether collaborative clusters of dioceses or Institutes want to continue working together. If so, these clusters should establish close working relationships with the National Office to enhance its coordinative function and to avoid duplication.

6.5. Predicted transition issues

Key challenges and the proposed mitigating strategies are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Potential issues and recommended approaches for the National Office

| Issue | Details | Proposed approach |
|--|--|--|
| National Office | | |
| Concerns about starting again and losing progress gained by existing national safeguarding and professional standards bodies within the Church | The Church Authorities committed considerable time, energy and resources to safeguarding and professional standards to date. Stakeholders may hold concerns that creating a new National Office is the equivalent of starting again. | The National Office is about consolidating and building on the work of its predecessors. The high-level mapping completed for this review ensures that the National Office is designed to enhance and extend on the work of existing national bodies (see Appendix D for details). |

| Issue | Details | Proposed approach |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Risk Management | | |
| <p>Centralised data management</p> | <p>Individuals and entities may query the need for, cost and practicality of centralised data management as well as express concerns regarding privacy and confidentiality.</p> <p>Challenges with the implementation of national information technology (IT) systems (see directly below) suggest the adoption of centralisation processes will not be easy. However, appropriate data centralisation enables trend analysis (i.e., the identification of patterns). Assessments of current performance can inform action to maintain or enhance future performance.</p> | <p>The National Office should support effective implementation by Church Authorities of the NCSS – to guide effective and efficient delivery of safeguarding and professional standards functions for all Catholic Entities.</p> <p>The National Office (particularly the Risk Management area) must assess data needs at the national level. Key questions include: What data is needed? (Data might be prioritised as follows: must-have, should-have, could-have, and will not have at this time.) What will be done with data at the national office? How will it be collected, stored, protected, maintained and analysed? Who will have access to it?</p> <p>Any consideration of how data are collected must include strategies for navigating the various state and territory legislative information regimes and processes for aggregating data to protect privacy and confidentiality.</p> <p>Consideration must also be given to the costs of the acquiring and maintaining any required technology for data collection, storage and/or analysis.</p> |

| Issue | Details | Proposed approach |
|--|--|---|
| Suitability of existing IT systems | <p>The issues and challenges associated with existing IT systems across Catholic Entities, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No interconnectivity between IT systems • Multiple service contractors for IT systems • Poor usability of available IT systems • Failure of entities to use the national database for matters dealt with under Towards Healing • Lack of an IT system for meaningful case management and reporting on trends and performance | <p>The current national safeguarding IT infrastructure must be thoroughly reviewed.</p> |
| Concerns about the effectiveness of the ACMR | <p>Presently, Church Authorities use the ACMR and paper-based systems to determine whether a priest or male religious has clearance to work with children and has been ‘licensed’ to work in a diocese or religious congregation.</p> <p>Key informants indicated a dual system is typically adopted because the ACMR system provides the equivalent of a ‘blanket approval’. Priests and male religious with an ACMR ID are considered ‘safe in all circumstances.’</p> <p>Conversely, a paper-based system allows for a ‘risk management-based approach’. Church Authorities can impose conditions on transfers / movements.</p> | <p>In taking over the function of the ACMR, the National Office undertakes an immediate review of the suitability of the ACMR and other systems designed to determine clearance to work with children and vulnerable persons. The findings should inform the review and development of national policy and procedures that outline the requirements of Church Authorities in relation to probity checking in a range of different contexts.</p> <p>Support for Church Authorities in using the ACMR should also extend to fostering an understanding of how such employment screening tracking tools can be helpful, but to also promote understanding of the limitations of such processes – and the greater importance of local policies and processes to identify and mitigate risk in day-to-day practice</p> |

| Issue | Details | Proposed approach |
|--|--|--|
| Capacity Building and Survivor Support | | |
| <p>Varying levels of need for national oversight and coordination of strategic support</p> | <p>A divide exists across Catholic Entities. Only some entities have had the leadership and resources to develop their own safeguarding systems and processes. Many others advised during consultation of the enormous strain on their members in seeking to implement evidence-informed safeguarding systems in the absence of national oversight and support.</p> <p>The establishment of a Capacity Building and Strategic Support function is likely to be welcome news for ‘struggling’ entities and relatively less so for those with well-established systems. The latter may begrudge subsidising a function focused (at least initially) on assisting the ‘struggling’ entities to achieve a higher standard of performance and attainment.</p> | <p>Sharing practice among entities, and between Church Authorities, along with peer learning and support will enable the Capacity Building and Survivor Support operational area to assist struggling entities to reach a minimum performance standard in a timely manner. The National Office can then focus on strategic planning and support programs / services relevant and required by the majority.</p> |
| <p>Concern about and opposition to the “One Church” model</p> | <p>The “One Church” model is often talked about with little details about how it can be demonstrated in practice. Of all the operational areas, there may be skepticism about the capability of the Capacity Building and Survivor Support to realise any degree of consistency in safeguarding and professional standards service delivery.</p> | <p>There needs to be a strong message of national consistency regarding professional standards and the NCSS, but local implementation, based on the principle of subsidiarity.</p> <p>The Capacity Building and Survivor Support area can then remain focused on oversight, coordination and capacity building.</p> <p>Context-specific safeguarding and professional standards service delivery will remain – as it should to ensure service delivery is fit for purpose.</p> |

| Issue | Details | Proposed approach |
|--|--|---|
| | | <p>Yet, with the oversight and capacity building supports being delivered and coordinated from a national perspective, there is improved accountability and transparency for the creation and maintenance of safe environments for all Church contacts.</p> |
| <p>Duplication with existing functions in other subsidiary Catholic Entities</p> | <p>Catholic Entities have reacted to the need for leadership and guidance on safeguarding and professional standards in different ways. For example, state/territory Professional Standards Directors have been appointed and work across most dioceses. There is a risk that the same or similar work will continue at the national, state / territory and even local (grassroots) level.</p> | <p>Oversight and coordination by the National Office should minimise or eliminate duplication. The National Office will need to maintain effective top-down and bottom-up communication channels and promote and enable collaboration and consultation to realise this aim.</p> |

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Standards, Compliance, and Complaints

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Potential conflict of interest with the combination of complaints and auditing</p> | <p>Two separate national bodies were created to separate the complaint and auditing functions – ACPPs and CPSL. This set up was promoting as avoiding the risk of auditors scrutinising the handling of complaints should the two functions be co-located.</p> | <p>The National Office erect information barriers and other protocols to prevent exchanges or communication that could lead to conflicts of interest. In addition, the National Office accredit external providers to undertake the auditing role consistent with its standards, framework and protocols. Alternatively, if accredited bodies already exist then they can take on the auditing function.</p> |
| <p>Replacement of Towards Healing and the Melbourne Response</p> | <p>During consultations a clear majority indicated that Towards Healing had ‘run its course’ and called for a replacement. Although the principal aim of Towards Healing was provision of pastoral care, in practice it has been inward focused and directed to handling compensation to victim-survivors.</p> <p>In addition, there is a desire for the conclusion of the Melbourne response, typically in the interests of promoting a consistent approach by relevant entities.</p> | <p>To set the National Office up for success, it is important there is confidence in the complaint protocols and procedures they consider and apply. Therefore, the work of the IAG in refining the procedures contained in Towards Healing and the Melbourne Response into a new National Response Protocol should be continued and consolidated by the National Office. Ideally, the protocols will provide a person-centred approach for engagement with, and provision of pastoral care and support for victim-survivors.</p> |
| <p>Integrity in ministry as a neglected area</p> | <p>There is no agreed process for addressing integrity in ministry complaints. Despite its limitations, some entities adopt the Towards Healing protocols.</p> | <p>As above, a review of complaints handling protocols is recommended.</p> |

7. Conclusion and recommendations

This report—and our recommendations for a new National Office and its operation—sits in the context of the Catholic Church’s efforts to improve safeguarding infrastructure to allow Church Authorities and entities to develop and entrench strong and rigorous safeguarding practice and systems within its structures and organisations across Australia. The success of the proposed National Office as a single oversight body will critically depend not only on the adoption of appropriate structure and functions but also on the mechanisms of accountability, transparency, equity and reform to provide leadership and guidance to the Catholic Church community in its entirety.

The National Office will be a key instrument to inform Church Authorities in matters relating to fast detection of child sexual abuse, and encouraging effective responses when abuse does occur, consistent with the issues raised by the Royal Commission. It will encourage, facilitate and build capacity to enact good practice to support the building and maintenance of positive cultures that are open and accountable, prevention-focused, and supportive of survivor-victims. Its focus will be to provide leadership and enhance communication and accountability—externally and internally—that can equip and support Church Authorities to continue on their journey and drive culture change within their members/entities.

As highlighted in this report, some of the areas that require closer attention in the future and where the National Office can play a key role are:

- The committed and coordinated ‘whole-of-church’ protection of children, young people, and vulnerable persons
- More strategic coordination and oversight guided by a single national body
- Explicit support for governance for the single national body that is lay-led and independent, with robust communication and accountability to its Members
- Strong communication and information sharing across the whole of the Catholic Church in Australia
- Consistency of support and standards – including for under-resourced entities – particularly those that operate across jurisdictions
- Addressing overlapping responsibilities, structures and processes both within Church Authorities and in civil regulation by governments.

7.1. Recommendations

In keeping with a commitment to the dignity of each person, and to providing safe places of worship and service, we recommend that the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) undertake the following steps:

A new National Office:

1. Establish a new National Office, comprised of an Executive Director, with three key, interlinked oversight operational areas: (1) Risk Management; (2) Capacity Building and Survivor Support; and (3) Standards, Compliance, and Complaints.

2. Agree the name of the new national office be *Catholic Safeguarding Australia* (the “National Office”).
3. Give the National Office the responsibilities currently undertaken by:
 - The Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards (ACCPs) (including the future maintenance of the Australian Catholic Ministry Register (ACMR))
 - Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL)
 - Any residual tasks from the work of the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) could also be assigned to the National Office once the IAG concludes.
4. Agree that the National Office will be focused on supporting and equipping Church Authorities to implement the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS), which relate to ministry and service with children and young people, and the emerging standards for vulnerable persons by adopting the following measures:
 - 4.1. Continue to consult with, and seek advice from, survivor advocacy and support bodies/representatives on the implementation of the new operational model
 - 4.2. Develop a flexible risk-based audit framework, based on the existing work of CPSL, and establish a panel of approved external auditors
 - 4.3. Use the work already undertaken by CPSL on auditing and training delivery as the basis for delivery of support through a ‘community of practice’ to enhance the service quality and capability of Church Authorities and Entities in implementing safeguarding standards.
 - 4.4. Identify the necessary statistical data collection with Church Authorities and work with the ACBC Research Office for centralised statistical collection and/or coordination.
 - 4.5. Use the list of potential issues and recommended approaches for the proposed National Office functions outlined in this report to guide the initial phase of implementation for the National Office.
5. Focus on existing strengths in each Church Authority and Catholic Entity supported by “capacity building” and on “collaborative processes” to (a) maximise cooperation and collaboration with civil society structures and requirements (both state/territory and Commonwealth) so that the “One Church” approach is in line, and not in conflict, with the safeguarding demands of civil society; and (b) support a “One Church” approach, while recognising the need for the independence of civil legal structures and Juridic Persons and processes of Church Authorities consistent with the principle of subsidiarity.
6. Agree that the work of the National Office should be underpinned by the nine principles for design and delivery of a safeguarding and professional standards operational model for Catholic Entities in Australia set out in this report: that it is to be effective, efficient, consistent with subsidiarity, collaborative, sustainable, educative, accountable, risk-based, and responsive.

7. Consider options for the Board of Directors, and for its Members, as to how the views and wishes of children, young people, and vulnerable adults can be heard and their perspectives included.

Processes for transitioning to the new National Office:

To achieve this, it is recommended that the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) transition functions in a staged manner from existing entities to the National Office, building on the existing organisational and governance structures that exist already for CPSL:

8. Adapt the Company name and Constitution of CPSL to transition into the National Office. The aim of changing the name of the Company, and the “Objects & Powers”, is to reflect the broadened scope of work, and to make the vehicle of Catholic Safeguarding Australia “fit for purpose”.
9. Commission the Board of Directors of the new National Office to develop and implement a Change Plan that adopts an efficient and effective change management approach to the transition of functions from existing entities to the new National Office including:
 - 9.1. Review options and ACBC and CRA (and AMPJP) should decide on the physical location of the National Office based on information about current leasing arrangements, staffing profiles, new functions and existing contractual/financial arrangements of legacy entities (CPSL, IAG, and ACCPS – including the operation of ACMR) and any potential co-location with other Catholic Entities or bodies.
 - 9.2. Reflect on the implications of this model for existing diocesan/provincial or state/territory office structures and identify duplication and potential cost savings - as existing regional and state professional standards offices vary greatly.
 - 9.3. Follow proper people-management practices with legacy entities in the move to the National Office, so that recruitment, redeployment, and/or redundancies are managed pastorally and sensitively within and across entities. Although there is a strong match between many roles in the existing entities and the types of roles within the new National Office, there will inevitably be some contraction of staffing. However, the skill set may be one that individual entities might want to deploy (e.g., in Provincial or state/territory diocesan professional standards offices).
 - 9.4. Current Member representatives of CPSL should, with external assistance, identify appropriate laypeople for the Board of Directors for the National Office, as terms of CPSL Board members expire – undertaking advertising and formal recruitment as needed. The broader focus of the National Office may demand the eventual appointment of laypeople with other skills. The Board of Directors should have gender diversity, appropriate professional expertise in risk management, change management and corporate governance/planning, Canon law, child protection, safeguarding and regulation, auditing and accreditation, and adult learning.
10. Invite the Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (AMPJP) to join ACBC and CRA as Members of the revised company structure and its work.

11. Establish a three-year cost-sharing agreement with Members that provides for basic infrastructure and staffing for the National Office. Unless this is agreed by ACBC, CRA (and AMPJP), it is a risk to successful implementation. This should not be a task left to the National Office to resolve; it must be developed and agreed prior to any transition, otherwise it leaves the Board, the Executive Director and staff of the National Office without assurance that they can deliver on their mandate.
12. Plan for ongoing monitoring, and a substantive external review within three years of the National Office and its impact on achieving cultural change and delivering on the recommendations of the Royal Commission.
13. Retain Australian Catholic Redress Limited (ACRL) as a separate registered company to represent the Group Members of ACRL under the Australian Government's National Redress Scheme, with appropriate communication mechanisms to support the National Office in areas like risk and survivor support.

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9. Appendices

Appendix A – Methodology

The project entailed four key stages of work.

Stage 1 – Project inception

Project inception commenced with a phone/video conference with members of the Safeguarding Steering Committee. This meeting addressed the following:

- introductions, key roles and responsibilities, project management and governance
- background and context of the Report in relation to the requirement to undertake a mapping exercise and develop an operational model (including a review of existing information and resources available)
- details of Church structures and lines of accountability
- agreement on the scope and methods of the project, including an approach for stakeholder engagement
- identification of information (e.g., outputs from requests for information from Church authorities and stakeholder consultations) required for the project
- project timelines, key deliverables and risks.

Stage 2 – Desktop review and consultations

The desktop review entailed the collection, organisation, analysis and synthesise of available and relevant data to safeguarding and professional standards practice. Key data sources included responses to the requests for information and stakeholder consultations, gathered to develop the report by Kinmond et al, 2019; the requirements of existing Commonwealth, State and Territory legislative and regulatory regimes designed to promote safeguarding practices; the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and principles for future safeguarding, and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations; reports on progress in implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) from Governments (Australian Government agencies and state and territory governments) and non-government organisations.

Our desktop review:

- confirmed the legislative and regulatory compliance requirements in relation to safety of children and vulnerable persons
- determined opportunities for universal approaches to safeguarding within Church services (in keeping with the “One Church” approach) and the requirements for tailored, context specific approaches (“subsidiarity”)
- identified reported and/or perceived challenges and constraints (e.g., financial) in the provision of safeguarding and professional standards services and practices across Catholic Entities

- uncovered gaps and duplications in safeguarding and professional standards service provision across Catholic Entities, instances of safeguarding governance arrangements within Catholic Entities that comply or fail to comply with the recommendations of the Royal Commission and other appropriate regulatory frameworks (as proxy measures of societal expectations).

ICPS undertook further select stakeholder consultations. Working with the Safeguarding Steering Committee, we aimed to ensure that Catholic Entities underrepresented in data received from information requests and consultations undertaken for the report by Kinmond et al, 2019 were identified and presented with the opportunity to provide feedback to us. Committee members supported us by contacting stakeholders in the first instance and encouraging their participation. After the first contact, ICPS managed all interactions with stakeholders.

Representatives from a range of Church and non-Church entities elected to participate in our consultation process including:

- Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC)
- Catholic Religious Australia (CRA)
- Australian Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (AMPJP)
- Catholic Professional Standards Limited (CPSL)
- Implementation Advisory Group (IAG)
- Archdiocese of Perth
- Archdiocese of Melbourne
- Archdiocese of Sydney
- Broken Bay Diocese
- Darwin Diocese
- Parramatta Diocese
- Canberra / Goulburn Diocese
- Ballarat Diocese
- Inter Congregational Gathering – including representatives from Edmund Rice, De La Salle, Franciscans, and Codea
- Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards
- State Professional Standards Offices
- Catholic Church Insurance
- Pastoral Research Office
- AGPAL-QIP

These consultations occurred via phone, video, and face-to-face. None of the consultations were digitally recorded. The ICPS team kept notes of key ideas and insights shared. As appropriate, we captured short verbatim quotes from key informants to enable us to privilege their unique voice, as appropriate.

The ICPS team iteratively analysed data. As key themes or topics emerged from the data, we captured them in an Excel spreadsheet. We added to this spreadsheet overtime, using it to collate information and categorise responses to pinpoint the areas of strength, and potential duplication or gaps. Much of the data included in this spreadsheet was qualitative.

On behalf of the ICPS team, Daryl Higgins presented together with the Safeguarding Steering Committee the findings from Stage 2 to a joint Plenary Meeting of the Conference, CRA Council and AMPJPs Executive in Melbourne, in November 2019.

Stage 3 – Operational model development

ICPS prepared a presentation on a proposed operational model for the Safeguarding Steering Committee. The presentation was informed by our research, analysis and synthesis activities during stages 1 to 2. Delivered to the Committee in February 2020, the presentation:

- described an initial draft model and its rationale
- outlined where, how and why it converged or diverged from existing safeguarding practices within the Catholic community.

During the presentation we obtained feedback and reflections from the Safeguarding Steering Committee on the draft model and their in-principle support for the model as described in this report.

Stage 4 – Final report

With advice and guidance from the Steering Committee, ICPS prepared this report outlining the operational model for safeguarding and professional standards service provision within the Catholic Church and Catholic Entities in Australia.

ICPS plans to support the Safeguarding Steering Committee to present the findings and recommendations from this report to the ACBC, CRA Council and AMPJP Executive in Melbourne, in May 2020.

Appendix B

CPSL Constitution with indicative amendments to select objects (shown in red)

Changes to the name of the company

Change the name of the company from “Catholic Professional Standards Limited” to “**Catholic Safeguarding Australia**” and ensure appropriate changes are made to the Constitution such that it complies with the demands of s.150 (1) of the Corporations Act, after which an application should be made under s.150 (1) (a) of the Corporations Act for an exemption from the use of “Limited” in the company name.

Definitional changes

“Professional Standards” to “Safeguarding and Professional Standards”

5. Objects and Powers (of the Company)

5.1 In order that Church Authorities may implement a pastoral response more closely aligned to the call of the Gospel, the charitable objects for which the Company is established are to care for, protect, educate, and support Church Authorities, Catholic Entities, and Church Contacts by:

- a) ~~Developing~~ **Establishing** and revising, as necessary, the **National Catholic Safeguarding Standards** to:
 - i. promote the safety of,
 - ii. prevent abuse and/or misconduct towards, and
 - iii. respond to allegations of abuse and/or misconduct concerning, Church Contacts who are involved with **Church Authorities and Catholic Entities**;
- b) **Ensuring the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards remain consistent with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and any legislative or regulatory requirements for child safe standards enacted by Australian governments (Commonwealth and state/territory);**
- c) **Working with Church Authorities to build and enhance their capacity to create and maintain a safe environment for all Church Contacts;**
- d) **Working with Church Authorities and Catholic Entities to build and enhance their capacity for compliance with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards;**
- e) **Providing education and training directly or indirectly to Church Authorities and Catholic Entities in respect of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and in doing so, fostering a culture of safety and care;**
- f) **Developing a “clearinghouse” function so that Church Authorities and Catholic Entities are regularly updated on policy and practice developments in the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable persons;**
- g) **Maintaining a register of persons involved in church ministry and ensuring that the register is verified against the findings of “working with children” registers developed and maintained by State or Federal governments;**

- h) Developing data collection systems, where appropriate and where necessary, keeping in mind the independence and autonomy of Church Authorities, and the need to avoid duplication with government data collection;
- i) Maintaining a Catholic redress system for the term of the National Redress Scheme as defined in the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018;
- j) Entering ~~contractual arrangements~~ into Agreements with Church Authorities to ensure that all Catholic Entities subject to the authority of Church Authorities meet the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards;
- k) Ensuring that Church Authorities and Catholic Entities engage with appropriate auditing processes in respect of subclause j) of these objects ~~compliance with the contractual arrangements in subclause b) occurs ensure ongoing compliance with the Safeguarding Standards;~~
- l) Reporting on the auditing of Church Authorities and Catholic Entities ~~results of the audits;~~
- ~~m) Carrying out such part or parts of the functions of the National Committee for Professional Standards and/or any State Professional Standards Office as are entrusted to the Company from time to time;~~
- n) Publishing an annual report or other report prepared in connection with its activities; and;
- o) Undertaking any other activities in furtherance of the above.

5.2 The Company can only exercise the powers in section 124(1) of the Act to:

- a) carry out the objects of the Company set out in clause 5.1; and
- b) do all things incidental or convenient in relation to the attainment of an object under clause 5.2(a).

Notes

j) **Entire Clause:** This power needs to be carefully thought through as the breadth of this clause is expansive rather than limiting, and probably/possibly includes all schools, hospitals, aged care facilities, parishes, Religious Institutes and any other body that comes under a Church Authority, or any other body defined as a “Juridic Person”. The scope of auditing needs to be carefully thought through and have clear limits. Duplication of auditing process is not a viable option. Schools, out-of-home care, disability and health services already have strong accountability and compliance regimes in place that should be recognised and not duplicated.

j) **“Contractual Arrangements”:** Although the intent of the clause (to ensure that Church Authorities fully engage with auditing processes) is laudable, the use of the term “contractual” may be a point of resistance and represent potential overreach by an external body. Consideration should be given to how civil regulators and governments are likely to view engagement with or intervention into independent bodies in respect of auditing: when it happens, how it happens and what form it takes.

k) **“appropriate auditing processes”:** while auditing is necessary, there needs to be significant flexibility so that appropriate auditing occurs, considering assessed risk, other compliance demands, existing auditing arrangements and alternative sources of auditing.

m) **NCPS and State PSOs:** This clause may now be redundant

CPSL Constitution with all indicative amendments accepted

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- a) Developing and revising, as necessary, the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards to:
 - i. promote the safety of,
 - ii. prevent abuse and/or misconduct towards, and
 - iii. respond to allegations of abuse and/or misconduct concerning,

Church Contacts who are involved with Church Authorities and Catholic Entities;

- b) Ensuring the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards remain consistent with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and any legislative or regulatory requirements for child safe standards enacted by Australian governments (Commonwealth and state/territory);
- c) Working with Church Authorities to build and enhance their capacity to create and maintain a safe environment for all Church Contacts;
- d) Working with Church Authorities and Catholic Entities to build and enhance their capacity for compliance with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards;
- e) Providing education and training directly or indirectly to Church Authorities and Catholic Entities in respect of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and in doing so, fostering a culture of safety and care;
- f) Developing a “clearinghouse” function so that Church Authorities and Catholic Entities are regularly updated on policy and practice developments in the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable persons;
- g) Maintaining a register of persons involved in church ministry and ensuring that the register is verified against the findings of “working with children” registers developed and maintained by State or Federal governments;
- h) Developing data collection systems, where appropriate and where necessary, keeping in mind the independence and autonomy of Church Authorities, and the need to avoid duplication with government data collection;

- i) Maintaining a Catholic redress system for the term of the National Redress Scheme as defined in the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018;
- j) Entering into Agreements with Church Authorities to ensure that all Catholic Entities subject to the authority of Church Authorities meet the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards;
- k) Ensuring that Church Authorities and Catholic Entities engage with appropriate auditing processes in respect of subclause j) of these objects;
- l) Reporting on the auditing of Church Authorities and Catholic Entities;
- m) Publishing an annual report or other report prepared in connection with its activities; and;
- n) Undertaking any other activities in furtherance of the above.

5.2 The Company can only exercise the powers in section 124(1) of the Act to:

- c) carry out the objects of the Company set out in clause 5.1; and
- d) do all things incidental or convenient in relation to the attainment of an object under clause 5.2(a).

Notes

j) **Entire Clause:** This power needs to be carefully thought through as the breadth of this clause is expansive rather than limiting, and probably/possibly includes all schools, hospitals, aged care facilities, parishes, Religious Institutes and any other body that comes under a Church Authority, or any other body defined as a “Juridic Person”. The scope of auditing needs to be carefully thought through and have clear limits. Duplication of auditing process is not a viable option. Schools, out-of-home care, disability and health services already have strong accountability and compliance regimes in place that should be recognised and not duplicated.

j) **“Contractual Arrangements”:** Although the intent of the clause (to ensure that Church Authorities fully engage with auditing processes) is laudable, the use of the term “contractual” may be a point of resistance and represent potential overreach by an external body. Consideration should be given to how civil regulators and governments are likely to view engagement with or intervention into independent bodies in respect of auditing: when it happens, how it happens and what form it takes.

k) **“appropriate auditing processes”:** while auditing is necessary, there needs to be significant flexibility so that appropriate auditing occurs, considering assessed risk, other compliance demands, existing auditing arrangements and alternative sources of auditing.

m) **NCPS and State PSOs:** This clause may now be redundant

Appendix C – Mapping to confirm the National Office builds and extends on existing work

The approach to the creation of the National Office was to identify and document how they needed to work (ways of working, see section 3.3) and what they needed to deliver (i.e., activities, outputs and the outcomes assigned to an Executive Director and three operational areas, see section 4). ICPS undertook a high-level mapping exercise to ensure all these elements worked together to enhance and extend on the work of existing safeguarding and professional standards national bodies. Table C-1 is the result of the mapping exercise.

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Table C-1. High level mapping to confirm coverage of safeguarding and professional standards functions and ways of working

| Ways of working (see section 4.3) | Desired safeguarding and professional standards inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes (indicative mapping to the NCSS) | National Office (see section 5) | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | CEO | Data and Risk | Strategic Support | Standards, Compliance and Complaint | Survivor Engagement and Care |
| Governance, leadership & accountability | Change management & cultural change (NCSS 1) | | | | | |
| | Financial management | | | | | |
| | Communications | | | | | |
| Strategy & advice | Evidence-informed policy & practice development (NCSS 10) | | | | | |
| | Research | | | | | |
| | Forward planning | | | | | |
| | Data collection, synthesis and reporting (NCSS 9) | | | | | |

| Ways of working (see section 4.3) | Desired safeguarding and professional standards inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes (indicative mapping to the NCSS) | National Office (see section 5) | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | CEO | Data and Risk | Strategic Support | Standards, Compliance and Complaint | Survivor Engagement and Care |
| Management & coordination | Records keeping (NCSS 1.6, 6.1.7, 6.4) | | | | | |
| | HR management (NCSS 5) | | | | | |
| | Complaints & claims (NCSS 6) | | | | | |
| Compliance & controls | Promoting standards and policy (NCSS 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 5.2.1, 6.1, 6.4) | | | | | |
| | Audits (NCSS 9) | | | | | |
| | Risk management (NCSS 1.5, 8.1) | | | | | |
| | Situational prevention (NCSS 8) | | | | | |
| | Collaboration with civil regulators | | | | | |

| Ways of working (see section 4.3) | Desired safeguarding and professional standards inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes (indicative mapping to the NCSS) | National Office (see section 5) | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | CEO | Data and Risk | Strategic Support | Standards, Compliance and Complaint | Survivor Engagement and Care |
| Engagement & learning | Partnering with children, young people, families, carers and communities (NCSS 2-4) | | | | | |
| | Training and professional development (NCSS 7) | | | | | |

Key: Dark purple shows the primary responsibility for an activity or outcome. Light purple demonstrates areas of intersection or interrelationship.

For example, the Data and Risk Function will be the collector and holder of valuable intel. The Data and Risk Function will need to disseminate information across the other Functions to guide decision making about activities like policy and practice development, future research directions, training requirements etc.