

AUGUST 2020

IMPACT REPORT

Collaboration • Consistency • Transparency



Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd acknowledges the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors and their families, the failure of the Catholic Church to protect, believe and respond justly to children and vulnerable adults, and the consequent breaches of community trust.

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd is committed to fostering a culture of safety and care for children and vulnerable adults.

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Catholic Professional Standards Ltd respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters of Australia. We pay respect to their Elders, past and present, and young leaders of today and the future. CPSL commits itself to the ongoing work of reconciliation with our Aboriginal families and communities.



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Executive Summary

Since Catholic Professional Standards Ltd ('CPSL') commenced operations in July 2017 to support capacity building of Catholic Church entities to protect children and vulnerable adults, more than 1,800 people have accessed training activities, 1,200 people have attended briefings, conference presentations and informal development activities, 13 entities have participated in a CPSL audit of their practices against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, and ten audit reports have been published on the CPSL website.

Church entities have reported positively that CPSL has helped build their capacity to protect children.

CPSL audits conducted to date have revealed consistent commitment of leaders and an emerging and strengthening child-safe culture. Entities audited to date have evidenced considerable effort and reformed processes within their entities to hear and respond to concerns raised by children and families. The audits also indicate a number of areas for practice improvement including risk management, engaging with children, families and communities to strengthen and promote safeguarding practices, cultural safety awareness and capacity, and a range of people management processes including professional/pastoral supervision, performance reviews and oversight, and access to ongoing professional development to support people in child-focused work.

About CPSL

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd ('CPSL') was formed in response to the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. CPSL was established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia. CPSL operates independently of the Church. CPSL Board Directors are lay people with professional expertise in the fields of law, education, human services, safeguarding and regulation.

CPSL has five core functions:

1. Set safeguarding standards to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults who engage with the Church at any level anywhere in Australia;
2. Provide training and support to enable Church authorities, entities, organisations, ministries and anyone involved in the Church to create a culture of safety for everyone;
3. Support the Church to build a culture of safeguarding;
4. Audit the compliance of Catholic entities, organisations and ministries in accordance with the Standards; &
5. Publicly report the results of those audits.

Since commencing operations in July 2017, CPSL has helped to lead the conversation and practice of safeguarding in Catholic communities across Australia.

CPSL's work focuses on two broad areas – building the capacity of entities to better safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults, alongside audit and compliance activities which assess and report on how entities are progressively implementing and improving their safeguarding strategies.

This approach is represented in Figure 1.

Building Capacity

CPSL has developed the first ever nationally consistent safeguarding standards for the Catholic Church in Australia, the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Edition One) ('the Standards'), which were published in May 2019.

Consultations for the second edition of the Standards which incorporates safeguards for adults at risk are currently underway and these Standards are expected to be finalised and published by December 2020.

Since February 2019, CPSL has delivered a range of training and capacity building activities to support the implementation of the Standards in all types of Church entities across the Catholic Church in Australia. Support materials, available through a resource hub on the CPSL website, have been created, identified, curated, and shared to support Church entities to implement safeguarding requirements.

Audit and Compliance

Concurrently, CPSL has developed and begun the roll-out of an audit program to assess the implementation of the Standards within entities. CPSL's audit program is designed to not only assess compliance, but also help Church entities build safeguarding capacity by identifying strengths, gaps and opportunities to improve safeguarding practices.

CPSL has published Audit Reports relating to ten Catholic entities. As is reflected later in this report, as more audits are conducted, trends begin to emerge as to how Catholic entities are progressing and this evidence is used to inform the ongoing evolution of capacity building initiatives.

This report presents key data about our activities and feedback from those who have accessed our services.



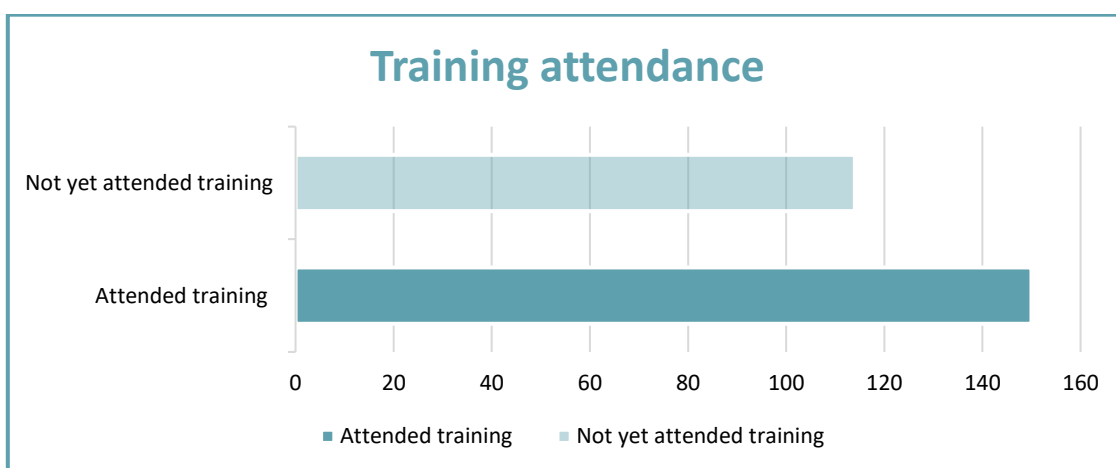
Figure 1: CPSL's continuous improvement model

Section 1: Capacity building

CPSL has delivered a mix of training sessions open to Catholic entities across the country, tailored sessions delivered to individual entities to meet their specific needs, as well as sessions addressing specific topics or risks. In December 2019, CPSL expanded capacity building activities to include topic-based webinar series' which have been accessed by participants from Catholic and other faith traditions. Since March 2020, CPSL's face-to-face training has been delivered online as a response to the public health concerns of COVID-19.

Between December 2018 and July 2020, more than 1,800 people have participated in CPSL capacity building activities across 53 sessions.

As of end of July 2020, 150 out of 264 Catholic entities (or 57%) have had a representative attend at least one training session delivered by CPSL.



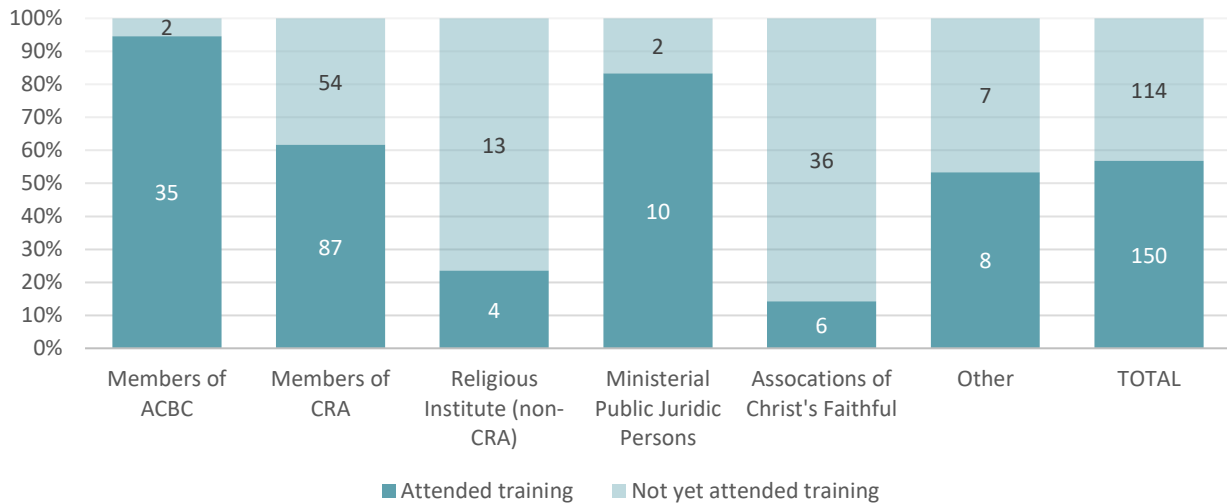
The Catholic Church in Australia is made up of many different types of entities and organisations. From CPSL's perspective, these entities are categorised according to the governance of the entity. Through CPSL's capacity building activities, a broad range of entities have accessed CPSL training.

Entities who have accessed training include the Catholic dioceses of Australia (including dioceses, archdioceses, ordinariate or personal ordinariate of the Latin Church or an eparchy of an Eastern Church – members of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference – 'ACBC'); religious institutes (a religious institute, secular institute or a society of apostolic life), including those who are members of Catholic Religious Australia (CRA); Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (an organisation which is constituted a public juridic person in canon law and carries on its mission in the name of the Church); Associations of Christ's Faithful (clerics or laity, or clerics and laity together, who strive with a common effort to promote public worship or Christian teaching); and other Catholic entity types throughout Australia.

In terms of training participation, 95% (35 of 37) of dioceses have attended CPSL training. 58% (91 of 158) of religious institutes, 83% (10 of 12) ministerial public juridic persons, and 14% (6 of 42) of Associations of Christ's Faithful have attended CPSL training. 53% (8 of 15) of organisations categorised as 'other' have also attended CPSL training.

Further information regarding entity participation is published regularly on the CPSL website – Safe Church > Church Reports > [Church Entity Engagement Report](#)

Training attendance by entity type



Safeguarding training for Church leaders

Awareness raising and capacity building for leaders of the Catholic Church in Australia was identified as a key need in 2018 when CPSL conducted a training needs analysis with Church entities. CPSL's training for leaders has been specifically designed to assist Church leaders to develop an understanding of the Standards, and explore in more detail issues of governance, culture and leadership in building safe organisations and communities.

Seventeen sessions have been delivered in capital cities around Australia, and one session was delivered online in June 2020 (further sessions in 2020 are scheduled for August and October).

The *NCSS Introductory Session for Leaders* provides the opportunity for leaders to come together with other leaders to explore issues of culture change, governance and leadership and be briefed comprehensively on the Standards in a consistent manner across the country. Participants attending these sessions have been from the broad range of Catholic entity types and the sessions have provided a valuable opportunity to exchange practice and experiences across organisations and build collegiality.

Feedback from participants demonstrates that leaders develop a better understanding of their specific safeguarding obligations as a result of this training.

"Probably the best online formation I have experienced"
Leaders' session, 6 April 2020

495 attendees to end of June 2020 - 84% evaluation completion rate

As a result of this training, are you aware of the purpose and function of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards?



As a result of this training, are you aware of your responsibilities as a Church leader in safeguarding and ensuring safe environments within your organisation?



How would you rate this session overall?



Participants are asked to identify the most useful aspects of the session. Five major themes have emerged to date:

1. Clarity regarding safeguarding obligations:

“The comprehensive, clear explanation of a complicated issue. Helped to give courage & vision on what is necessary to be implemented.”

“The overall picture we got of safeguarding gave me the opportunity to identify any gaps that need attention.”

“Clarity about the obligations, process and next steps”.

2. Enhanced understanding of CPSL’s purpose and how it delivers its services:

“[The session was] a reminder to ensure we have procedures on track & policies in place - Information is power! Great to understand CPSL's role + responsibilities. Appreciate the collegiate nature of the processes ahead.”

“It gave me an overall idea of what CPSL is & how to apply its objective to our mission here.”

“I have a much better understanding of the purpose & fundamental functioning of CPSL. Questions raised in the handouts are extremely helpful for self-analysis and planning.”

3. Opportunity to understand the audit process in greater depth:

“Audit section and introduction to tools like self-assessment of compliance very helpful.”

“I found the three sessions excellent - it gave me a great overview of the Standards, as well as the audit processes and the support available. It has given me the background to take part in some more specific PD.”

“I know what's involved in an audit. All in all an informative day that has given me the direction we need to fill in the gaps.”

4. Awareness of the safeguarding resources available to support the implementation of the Standards:

“Resources - amazing volume of work done - well done!”

“Confirms the directions we are taking. Confident that the resources are available.”

“As a new person in Leadership, I found the three sessions very informative and helpful especially the resources available to help us and the sisters.”

5. Opportunity to meet with leaders from other entities and share knowledge and experiences:

“Listening to what others are encountering and how they are structured. The idea to get people together to talk and share experiences.”

“Discussion based activities allowed for important information sharing. Additionally, it was an opportunity to network and use those connections for future collaboration.”

“The general information provided. The group sharing with my peers was very helpful as we now have created contacts to help one another put this in practice.”



Figure 2: Wordcloud feedback from the NCSS Introductory Session for Leaders on what was most useful about the session

Supporting the implementation of safeguarding strategies

The *Applying the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Workshop* has, as its name suggests, a strong operational focus and is targeted to those with key safeguarding responsibilities within the scope of their role. The workshop offers an in-depth look at the application of the Standards and explores strategies for implementation.

The option to facilitate tailored, entity or group specific training has also been available. In addition to publicly available training, CPSL has delivered tailored training on the NCSS to dioceses, religious institutes, ministerial PJPs, collaborative groups such as directors of clergy, life and ministry offices, as well as other Catholic organisations.

“I appreciate that CPSL take us on a journey & give time/space/support to implement & are willing to work with us in an open & collaborative way (non-threatening like other regulators).”
Applying session, 31 July 2020

Sixteen sessions have been delivered face to face in cities around Australia, and five sessions delivered online in 2020. Of these, 13 sessions have been public sessions open to all types of Church entities, and eight have been sessions tailored to an individual entity.

Participant feedback indicates that attendees have valued the opportunity to learn about the Standards in depth, to ask questions about implementing the Standards, explore practical examples, and to network with peers.

Participant ratings have been consistently high across these sessions, as evidenced in the evaluation data below:

552 attendees to end of July 2020 - 91% evaluation completion rate

As a result of this training, do you have a greater understanding of the NCSS and your associated safeguarding responsibilities?



As a result of this training, are you better equipped to begin applying the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards within your entity?



How would you rate this session overall?



In response to participant feedback, in 2020 CPSL developed and began delivering additional specialised sessions for smaller entities whose ministry involves minimal or no contact with children, as distinct from entities whose ministry includes direct work with children.

As with the Leaders sessions, participants are asked to identify the most useful aspects of the session. Five major themes have emerged to date:

1. Opportunity to network and have conversations with people they otherwise might not encounter:

“Important standards today and the shared discussion at the end was incredibly valuable as real safeguarding experiences.”

“Comments + questions from participants. There was a lot of wisdom/experience in the room.”

“The sharing at tables - diversity of situations.”

2. Discussion of safeguarding scenarios and practical examples used in the workshop:

“Interactions with participants, complex scenarios, tools.”

“The use of very practical examples really helped to make the standards very concrete. As well as opportunities for open and frank discussion. Greater confidence in the church’s response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission.”

“Practical approaches on how to adhere to the standards.”

3. Clarification of specific details of the Standards:

“Stepping through the criteria & allowing discussion.”

“Well organised step by step process going through the Standards in detail with excellent resources.”

“Better understanding of what is required and who is responsible for different aspects of complying to the standards.”

4. Access to resources produced and curated by CPSL:

“Exceptionally informative. Great to have so much about the CPSL website that we haven't been exposed to previously.”

“Discussions with network. Practical toolkits. Case Studies.”

“The structure of the standards and the templates, which can be used directly in workplace.”

5. Understanding how the Standards can be contextualised in the wider context of safeguarding:

“Connecting the dots. Understanding the cascade of requirements from the Royal Commission to COAG and the Catholics.”

“Brings important issues to the forefront of our mind in everything we do - overarching.”

“Connecting with others through discussion > creating a community of practice. Online resources. Booklets provided. CPSL is providing an important service - I'm keen to attend future events. “



Figure 3: Wordcloud feedback on what was most useful in the session from the Applying the NCSS Workshop

Topic-specific safeguarding support

In addition to supporting leaders and creating a consistent understanding of organisational safeguarding requirements across the country, CPSL has facilitated a range of activities addressing specific and specialist topics. In a training needs analysis conducted in 2018, those working in the Church in Australia identified a range of topics which needed specific focus and specialist input to address ongoing risks.

“It gave me courage to interrupt a groomer if need be.”
 Introduction to Grooming Awareness webinar, 15 May 2020

The table below provides an overview of the range of sessions, topics and participation to date and those in advanced planning for delivery later in 2020.

Topic	Mode of delivery	No of participants	Participant demographics	Overall session rating
Safeguarding in International Contexts	Full-day face to face seminar with keynote input from Fr Hans Zollner SJ	39	Religious institutes & organisations with ministries delivered to children in countries outside Australia	4.3
	Webinar	14		3.2

Topic	Mode of delivery	No of participants	Participant demographics	Overall session rating
Grooming Awareness ¹	3-part webinar series with subject matter experts & one session specifically addressing online grooming delivered with Office of the eSafety Commissioner	330	Representatives of more than 18 Christian denominations	4.5
Seminary Formation & Safeguarding ²	3-part seminar series (online) with input from Fr Hans Zollner SJ & subject matter experts	207	Seminary students, seminary staff & formators & academic staff from theological colleges across Australia, New Zealand & Papua New Guinea	4.4
Safeguarding Introduction for Church Leaders Pilot ³	Adaptation of NCSS <i>Introductory Session for Leaders</i> for leaders from member churches of NCCA	12	Clerical & lay leaders from churches including the Coptic Diocese of Melbourne, the Coptic Diocese of Sydney, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Australia & New Zealand & the Chaldean Diocese of St Thomas.	4.8
Managing high risk individuals ⁴	2-part webinar series with subject matter expert	144	Representatives of more than 17 Christian denominations and other organisations	4.8
Responding to problematic sexualised behaviours in children	3-part webinar series with subject matter expert		To be delivered in August-September 2020	

Comments from participants across these sessions include:

“Best practice from what is being done is a great teacher”.

“Many thanks for the opportunity. Much appreciated.”

“Thank you for an outstanding effort. I very much appreciate it and it has and will make a difference leading us to Safer Churches.”

“The presenter was very knowledgeable and competent in relation to the topic. He also spoke the truth in an uncompromising way and this was very encouraging.”

“Being made aware of how different seminaries are operating and how all recognise the need for change.”

CPSL has been invited by numerous organisations to provide specific input, briefing and training support to increase awareness, knowledge and capacity in Church entities. In excess of 1,200 people have participated in the following events.

Entity	Mode of delivery
Australian Catholic Primary Principals Association	Briefing
Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH)	Briefing
Australian Catholic University	Guest lecture - safeguarding
Calvary Ministries	Briefing
Catholic Education Cairns Child Protection Conference	Conference presentation
Catholic Education Commission WA	Briefing
Catholic Schools NSW	Conference presentation
Catholic Secondary Principals Association of Victoria	Briefing
Catholic Social Services Australia Conference	Conference presentation
Diocese of Armidale Clergy Conference	Safeguarding overview

¹ Developed and delivered in partnership with the National Council of Churches Australia Safe Church Program

² Developed and delivered in partnership with Catholic Theological College at the University of Divinity

³ Developed and delivered in partnership with the National Council of Churches Australia Safe Church Program

⁴ Developed and delivered in partnership with the National Council of Churches Australia Safe Church Program

Entity	Mode of delivery
Diocese of Darwin Clergy Conference	Safeguarding overview & preparing for audit
Divine Word Missionaries	Safeguarding overview
Dominican Education Australia	Briefing
Dominicans Provincial Gathering	Safeguarding overview
Edmund Rice Education Australia	Briefing
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters	Safeguarding overview & preparing for audit
Institute of the Sisters of Mercy Australia & Papua New Guinea	Briefing
Mercy Ministries Ltd	Briefing
Missionaries of God's Love Seminarians	Safeguarding overview
National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council	Briefing
National Diocesan Financial Administrators	Briefing (x3)
NSW Diocesan Directors – Clergy, Life & Ministry	Safeguarding overview
Queensland Provincial Safeguarding Conference	Briefing
Resurrection Fathers	Briefing
Yarra Theological Union	Conference presentation

Resource hub

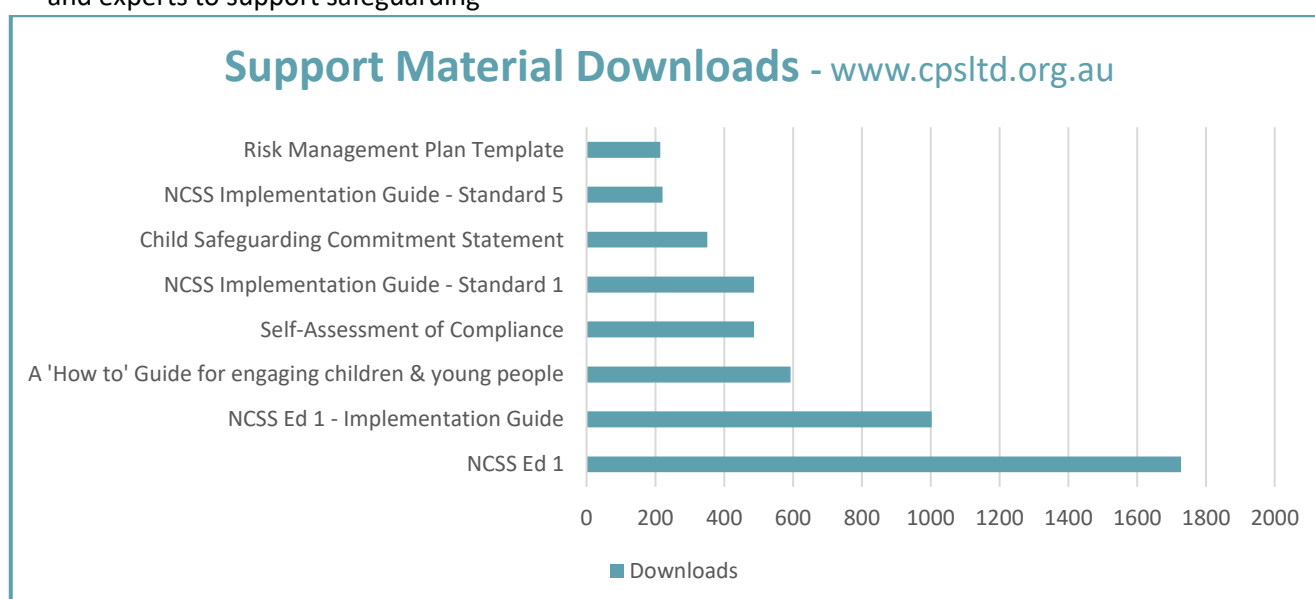
In tandem with the release of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (Edition One) in 2019, CPSL released a range of support materials to support Church entities to implement the requirements of the Standards.

CPSL regularly receives requests from Church entities for guidance on specific safeguarding requirements. As audits are conducted, good practice examples are identified. When a gap is identified, the CPSL team develop specific templates or guidance to support practice improvement. These support materials, along with identified good practice, are curated and made accessible through the CPSL website.

CPSL has partnered with a number of organisations to develop resources to meet identified gaps. Organisations include Catholic Church Insurance (parish risk tool), ACU ICPS (How to Guide for engaging with children about their safety; Ask Young People Survey – faith-based survey for young people; Child Safeguarding Competence Survey), National Council of Churches (targeted training for Church Leaders; webinar series on a range of specific topics identified as knowledge gaps in the sector).

Current Support Materials:

- 45 tools and guides published by CPSL to support safeguarding systems and strategies
- 70 examples of good practice from Catholic organisations
- 87 resources from a range of Australian and international NGOs, government instrumentalities, universities, and experts to support safeguarding



Section 2: Audit and compliance

The initial phase of the CPSL audit program has focused on the unregulated ministries of the Catholic Church such as parish ministry, youth ministry, family and social activities, pastoral ministries and other diocesan and congregational ministries. These ministries of the Church are subject to a full and detailed safeguarding audit by CPSL, examining and assessing the application of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards' indicators in detail.

As of August 2020, ten audits of Church entities have been completed. Reports have been made publicly available on these audits of an archdiocese, three dioceses and six religious institutes. A further one audit has been completed with the audit report in draft, and another two audits are in the fieldwork phase. Eleven entities will undergo an audit in the remainder of 2020, and sixteen entities are confirming arrangements for audits in 2021.

Of the ten completed audits, seven have been of Category One entities who work with children and three audits of Category Two entities who have contact with children. As can be seen in the chart below, the audits have yielded a range of compliance results and each audit generated a number of recommendations tailored to the entity to strengthen their safeguarding policies and practices.

NAME	TYPE	CATEGORY	SCORE	RECOMMENDATIONS
Archdiocese of Brisbane	Archdiocese	1	84%	18
Benedictine Community of New Norcia	Religious Institute	1	99%	2
Christian Brothers of Oceania Province	Religious Institute	1	89%	15
Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance - Tarrawarra Abbey	Religious Institute	2	100%	2
Diocese of Ballarat	Diocese	1	73%	16
Diocese of Darwin	Diocese	1	89%	13
Diocese of Rockhampton	Diocese	1	94%	11
Marist Fathers Australian Province	Religious Institute	2	89%	8
Presentation Sisters of Wagga Wagga	Religious Institute	2	98%	12
Missionaries of God's Love	Religious Institute	1	100%	7

Audit feedback from Church entities

In July 2020, CPSL launched an Audit Customer Evaluation Survey for those entities who have completed an audit and had their audit report published. Feedback received to date is presented in the graph below (the survey remains open as of 14/08/2020). The survey is issued to both the Church Authority and the safeguarding contact for the entity. Seven entities have responded to date with a total of twelve respondents - six Church Authorities and six safeguarding contacts.

Satisfaction with the audit process has been high. A number of Church entities noted that it is vital that auditors have a thorough understanding of religious life and its structures, as well as familiarity with how different Catholic entities inter-relate, particularly in the context of clerical religious working within diocesan structures.

"We have improved our practises. It also broadened my understanding and that of others in our diocese"

Bishop, August 2020

Respondents were asked what they considered the primary benefit of undertaking the CPSL safeguarding audit. Comments to date include:

"We now have some independent and objective comment about our practices and policies and can look to improving those areas that need attention. We have a better idea about what is required to make improvements and what documentation we need to continue to hold and develop in this area. We also have

an independent and objective as well as expert opinion that can be used to convince those who might be reluctant that changes need to be made and standards need to be upheld.”

“Better measures in place for the overall protection of children visiting [our entity].”

“Better understanding of how to implement the standards.”

“The audit enabled [our entity] to sharpen its approach to safeguarding. The audit noted gaps in our systems that need improvement. The audit highlighted the importance of safeguarding across the [entity] especially with ministries with children.”

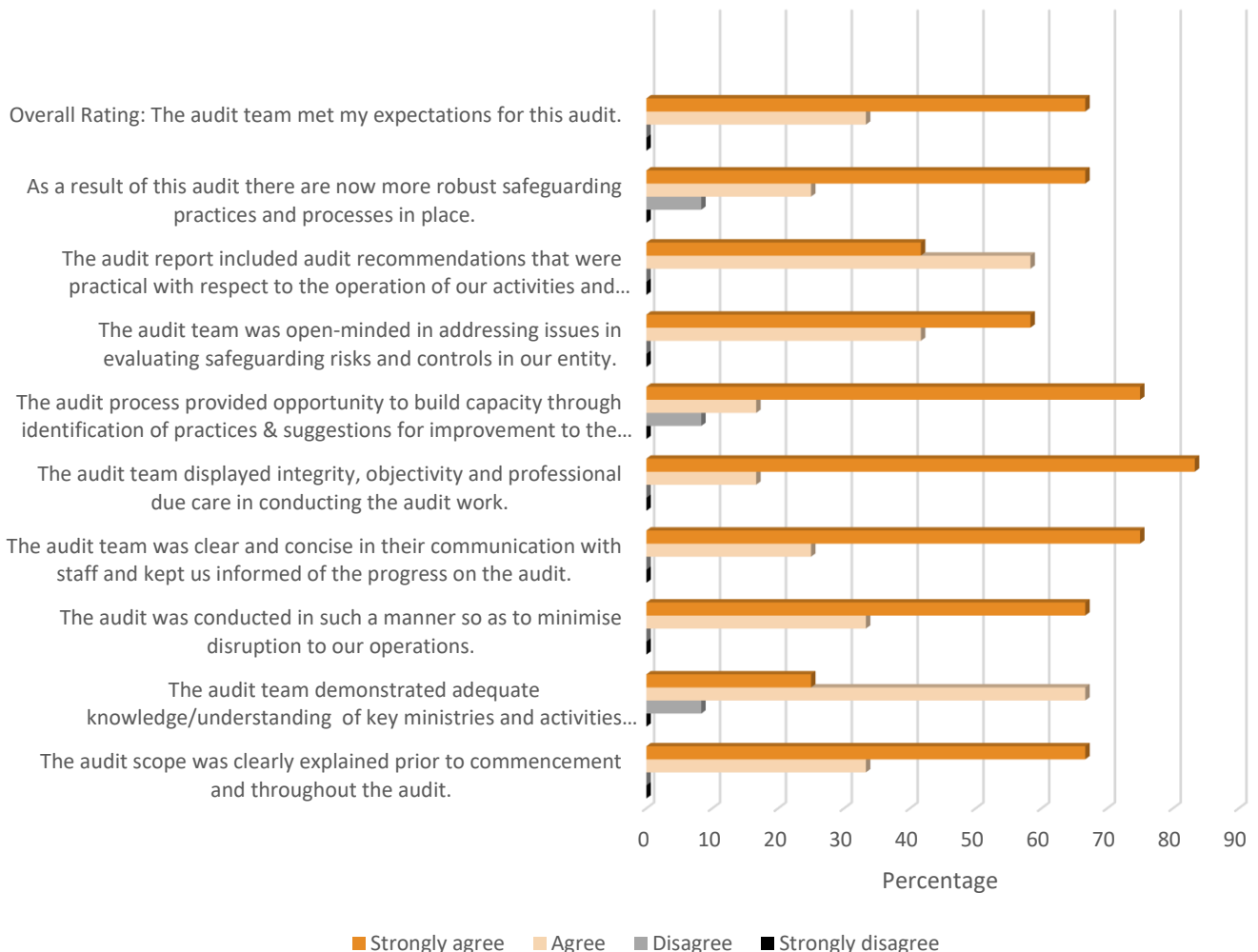
“To provide check and balance on our existing safeguarding practices. To provide morale boost to our community members and employees.”

“The process raised awareness among the membership of standards and how best to abide by them in our circumstances. The updating and sharpening of policies and procedures.”

“The audit process and report has provided significant assistance to the [entity] in its safeguarding endeavours. The [entity] was unsure how it was performing and the audit process enabled the [entity] to focus on safeguarding areas where it was lacking. The educative benefits of the audit were enhanced by the skilful and considerate manner in which the audit was conducted.”

“The CPSL audit has strengthened safeguarding in our [entity] by confirming good policies and practices that we had introduced in recent years and by identifying areas for improvement.”

Audit customer survey



Over the course of 12 months of auditing, CPSL has received informal feedback on the audit process. Examples of this feedback include:

“Thanks also to you for your guidance and assistance and for engaging us in a collaborative and very educative process.” *Religious Institute Leader*

“The Leadership Team is grateful for the assistance of the Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) audit staff ... for your guidance, support and availability throughout the entire process. While the process itself was time-consuming at times, the Leadership Team now feel we have an enduring legacy to pass on to future Leadership Teams, who will be better positioned to maintain and uphold these standards.” *Religious Institute Leader*

“I am very grateful to [CPSL team] for their dedication in conducting the audit and for the way they worked with [entity] staff and the people at each of the parishes they visited. The findings of the audit have given us encouragement in our efforts in safeguarding children and the recommendations of the audit have provided us with steps to take to develop the safeguarding practices further.” *Bishop*

“With a thousand thank yous for this report and for your team’s excellent work.” *Bishop*

“The Standards are very explicit. It was challenging to go through documentation with its many indicators and we knew we had some gaps. However, once we received recommendations from the CPSL team as part of the initial audit, we started to address those gaps.” *Safeguarding Manager*

“I am reassured that the independence and transparency of CPSL conducting audits is a very important step in not only responding to the Royal Commission, but sending a strong message to survivors that we, as a Catholic Church, are taking these important steps to minimise all risks for the safeguarding of children.” *Religious Institute Leader*

“I think that CPSL in developing the Standards has done the Church in Australia a huge service because they are a national set of standards, so now everyone is working from the same page... I think that to audit the Standards makes them work, enlivens them if you like. It is the audit and the discipline of the audit that makes it more real in terms of how the Standards apply to an entity. We have never had oversight on a national level with nationally consistent standards before ... Another positive is that since undergoing the audit, I have had other dioceses and archdioceses talking to me about the process and implementation of the Standards. Prior to the introduction of the Standards, conversations would happen around safeguarding across different Church entities but we were all doing different things. Now, we are working towards the same goals, using a single set of standards.” *Safeguarding Manager*

“It would improve matters if the wide spectrum of entities covered by Category Two was addressed in setting criteria and indicators.”

Religious Institute Leader, August 2020

“The history of our diocese has been scarred by numerous crimes against children committed by some notorious offenders. The CPSL audit was an important element in our efforts to guard against such crimes now and for the future. The audit has helped us on the road to making our community safe for everyone.” *Bishop*

Emerging trends and insights from audits

Not only does auditing ensure that the Church provides safe environments, but it leads to continuous improvement in this respect. Assessment of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards against a maturity model places all entities in a position of striving to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their strategies.

Evidence gathered from the audits conducted to date reveals the following trends in the implementation of the requirements for child safe organisations.



**Leadership,
monitoring &
improvement**

STANDARDS 1 & 9

Standards 1 and 9 focus on leadership, governance and improvement. Where Church Authorities have responsibility for ministries outside Australia, there is evidence that safeguarding awareness and application in the overseas context is increasing. More information and support including practical examples and application in different cultural contexts may be needed to support this work.

Risk management is challenging. Whilst all entities to date have evidenced a risk management document, on occasions an appropriate level of understanding of the risk profile of the entity has not been apparent. When thinking about a particular ministry, what is needed is a full understanding of where the entity's members, volunteers and employees work and which ones are ministering in a high risk environment. Entities need to understand which ministries or parishes or missions operate in higher risk environments with respect to safeguarding, and therefore may need additional training, support or oversight.



**Engaging with
children, families
& communities**

STANDARDS 2, 3 & 4

Standards 2, 3 and 4 were relatively new expectations for entities when the Standards were published in May 2019. In the earlier audits, entities were still developing strategies to address the requirements of these Standards. As audits have progressed over the past 15 months, entities are increasingly demonstrating simple and innovative ways to engage with children and families. This is very encouraging, but there remains significant work to be done to really embed engagement with children, families and communities into everyday practice.

All entities audited to date have struggled to demonstrate the provision of child-friendly complaints materials.



**Right people,
right role,
right knowledge**

STANDARDS 5 & 7

Standards 5 and 7 are all about the people within an entity – leaders, employees, ordained and consecrated members, volunteers, contractors. Both of these Standards are detailed and require numerous inter-related strategies to be evidenced. They are also the Standards where the most frequent gaps have been identified to date.

In general, safeguarding is not yet embedded into recruitment processes as fully as intended in the Standards. Recruitment policies, position descriptions, interview questions and referee checking all require reinforcement of key safeguarding messages and are critical to the development of robust screening processes.

Performance appraisals are not yet embedded in entities' human resource processes for staff and volunteers – CPSL has provided guidance and support to almost every entity to date in relation to this area. In addition, performance appraisals for clergy and religious is a very new concept and most entities are still developing an understanding of how to practically implement this requirement for their members.

Regarding professional/pastoral supervision, particularly in religious institutes, there has been limited understanding in relation to who within the entity requires supervision. For instance, we have encountered some religious institutes where because a member is 'retired' and classified as no longer in active ministry, supervision has not been provided.



**Right people,
right role,
right knowledge**
STANDARDS 5 & 7

However, when interviewing retired members as part of the audit fieldwork, it has become apparent that some of those who are retired are in fact in very active ministry – volunteering with other organisations or undertaking their own ministry and working with children or adults at risk. As a result of the fieldwork, CPSL has made recommendations to ensure that all who are providing any sort of ministry involving children (and adults at risk) are able to access adequate professional/pastoral supervision.

Selection and screening of individuals entering seminaries and formation programs was a significant focus of recommendations of the Royal Commission. Examination of this area to date indicates that this area has been subject of significant focus and the entities audited to date have demonstrated a comprehensive and structured process.

In examining screening processes for clergy and religious coming from overseas to minister in Australia, evidence has indicated that documentation relating to screening processes needs improvement – documentation such as letters of recommendation and interview notes.

Safeguarding induction and on-going training are key activities to build a child safe culture – several entities audited to date have not had a formal induction or training program in place. In other cases, safeguarding induction training has been introduced for ordained or consecrated members but the same training has not been rolled out to their employees and volunteers. For dioceses, it has been apparent that there continues to be difficulty in scheduling training, particularly induction, for remote parishes – entities are grappling with issues of timing (how soon to conduct induction after commencement of a volunteer or employee) when location, low volume and stretched resources all impact on delivery.

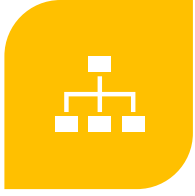
There are six specific areas which need to be addressed in induction and refresher safeguarding training as a minimum:

- Code of Conduct;
- safeguarding risk management;
- Child Safeguarding Policy and procedures;
- Complaints Handling Policy and procedures;
- reporting obligations; and
- e-safety training.

Audits to date have demonstrated that these six elements are not routinely being addressed in induction training, and as noted above, the induction needs to be delivered to all personnel.

Audits have also shown a strong correlation between induction training and ongoing safeguarding refresher training – that is, when induction processes are not in place, ongoing training is also absent, and conversely when induction processes are in place, refresher training is more likely to be delivered.

Cultural safety is another relatively new concept specified in the Standards. The majority of entities audited to date do not have a comprehensive response to this requirement.



**Systems, policies
& procedures**

STANDARDS 6, 8 & 10

Standard 6 appears to be the strongest in terms of compliance to date. All requirements in Standard 6 are being addressed to a significant degree. The majority of entities audited to date have clearly focused their efforts on ensuring their complaints management processes are in line with the requirements identified by the Royal Commission. It is evident that the scrutiny of the past has had an impact in this area. Professional Standards units or specific complaints handling individuals/teams now exist in larger entities and these personnel have specific expertise in this area. In smaller religious institutes, the leader typically deals with any complaints and all leaders who have participated in audits to date are acutely aware of their responsibilities.

CPSL's audit does not focus on past complaint processes, but rather focused on what the process is now – what happens for someone coming forward today (whether a child or adult)? Audits of entities to date have shown that complaints processes are comprehensive and dealt with in a timely way.

As noted earlier, risk management has been identified as a challenge for entities and there is a strong correlation between risk management and Standard 8 which focuses on creating safe physical and online environments. Generally, if an entity does not have robust risk management practices in place, they will not have some of the key elements of Standard 8 in place.

Two specific issues have been identified from the audits conducted to date. First, a general gap in entities having processes in place for monitoring internet usage and activity. Secondly, due diligence and risk assessment processes when considering contractors and use of entity facilities.

Conclusion

NETWORKING – CONSISTENCY – COLLABORATION – SUPPORT

CPSL's national focus has provided opportunities for Church entities to network and discuss their safeguarding strengths and gaps with other Church bodies within whom they may otherwise not have contact.

It has delivered consistency – the Standards apply to all, the training and capacity building is accessible to all and delivering audits has resulted in consistent assessment and guidance to strengthen practice across a diverse group of entities and ministries. The publication of audit reports may also be contributing to improved practices as entities progressively learn from the results of others.

CPSL's approach to date has also been characterised by active support. CPSL has asked entities what they need to improve their knowledge and ability to make their communities safer spaces for all, and entities have responded resoundingly, identifying the need for more training, more guidance, and more support. CPSL has responded by offering specialised safeguarding training on the Standards and training on topics which have been identified as key needs by those working within entities. CPSL has progressively made available increasing numbers of resources including tools, template, guides, resources and examples of good practice.

Fifteen months since the publication of the first edition of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards have now passed. In this time, more than 3,000 people have accessed training and development activities, thirteen Church entities have participated in the CPSL audit program and more than 200 support materials have been made available. All of this activity demonstrates the commitment and effort of Church entities to make their ministries safe for all.

CPSL's commitment to continuous improvement means that it will continue delivering and evolving essential safeguarding capacity building and audit services it was established to provide.