

## **Catholic Church professional standards body releases draft Safeguarding Standards**

27 April 2018

The Catholic Church's new safeguarding body will today released the draft National Catholic Safeguarding Standards which will be used to gauge the capacity of the Catholic Church to provide safe places for children and vulnerable adults.

The draft standards can be found on the new Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) website which will also be launched this afternoon at [www.cpsltd.org.au](http://www.cpsltd.org.au)

Ms Limbrick, CEO of CPSL, said the release today and the broad consultation around the standards which also starts today is an important development in strengthening child and vulnerable adult protections in the Catholic Church in Australia.

"It is also a significant step in implementing one of the Royal Commission's key recommendations," Ms Limbrick said.

"This is the first time, anywhere in Australia and among just a handful of countries around the world, where the Catholic Church will be accountable for their adherence to consistent and measurable national standards for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

"This is a major development for CPSL and an important plank in our work to do all we can to ensure children are safe in Catholic parishes, churches, ministries, outreach, schools, hospitals and other places.

"These Standards incorporate statutory requirements that Church organisations which deal with children already need to adhere to," Ms Limbrick said.

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards set out 10 Standards which provide the framework for Catholic Church entities to build child-safe cultures and to advance the safety of children across the Catholic Church in Australia.

The Standards build on the guidance of the Royal Commission and the draft National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations from the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The Standards range across areas such as leadership, governance and culture; human resource and complaints management; education and training; communication with children and working with families, carers and communities.

CPSL is calling on anyone interested in the development of the Standards to provide feedback. Written submissions can be made through the CPSL website.

Ms Limbrick said consultations with Dioceses, Religious Orders and other Catholic organisations over the past six months have reinforced what the Royal Commission found.

“The levels of protections for children and vulnerable adults can vary widely from one Catholic diocese to another”, she said.

“That is unsustainable and dangerous.

“Every child and every vulnerable adult must be protected by the same standards regardless of where they live or what part of the Catholic Church they come in contact with.”

CPSL is a new independent company established by the Catholic Church in Australia in November 2016 to develop, audit and report on compliance with professional standards across Catholic entities.

CPSL is functionally independent from the Church leadership and is a significant development in the Church’s approach to protecting children and vulnerable adults.

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