



MEDIA RELEASE

Community consultations on CPSL draft Safeguarding Standards complete

5 July 2018

More than 450 people have taken part in 16 consultation sessions held around Australia to hear responses and gather input into the draft National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

Six of the consultation forums were exclusively for survivors of Church sexual abuse, their families and advocates, while ten were attended by stakeholders including Catholic religious, clergy and Church employees, volunteers and parishioners.

The new safeguarding standards are being developed by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL), established by the Catholic Church in November 2016, to develop, audit and report on compliance with professional standards across Catholic entities.

Ms Kate Eversteyn, CPSL Director of Safeguarding, said the consultations, particularly with survivor groups, have been valuable and rewarding.

“For many of the more than 60 survivors who attended the consultations this was the first time they have been asked to give feedback on efforts to make Church institutions safer for children,” she said.

“For many survivors walking into the consultations required courage, they were naturally apprehensive and suspicious of CPSL.

“For some, this apprehension was gradually overcome as they began to understand CPSL’s role and shared experiences of how the abuse could have been prevented. The survivors who attended expressed a clear desire to help ensure the abuses of the past are not repeated.

“The feedback we received over the two-hour sessions was invaluable and will go a long way to helping us finalise the child safeguarding standards and audit approach for the Church.

“I would like to thank all the participants for making the effort to come along and helping CPSL, we look forward to creating more opportunities for engagement in the future,” Ms Eversteyn said.

The information gathered during the sessions is being collated and will be used by CPSL in the development of the first published National Catholic Safeguarding Standards which are scheduled to be completed before the end of 2018.

A summary report from the consultations will be published on the CPSL in the coming months.

Ms Sheree Limbrick, CEO of CPSL, said these consultations are part of an ongoing strategy to seek input from many interested groups, both within and outside the Catholic Church.

“Along with these consultations, we will shortly be meeting with other groups such as Catholic education, health, social services, leaders of seminaries, tertiary education providers, youth ministry leaders and parents of children in Catholic schools,” she said.

“We are also in the final stages of developing resources for consulting directly with children engaged with the Catholic Church today – children engaged in parishes, altar servers, children’s liturgy groups and youth groups.

“There are many voices we need to listen to, and many areas of Church ministry and activity in which we need to ensure our Standards can affect change.”

The draft 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 draft 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 draft 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.

The draft National Catholic Safeguarding Standards can be seen on the [CPSL website](#)

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