



MEDIA RELEASE

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Catholic Safeguarding Standards another step forward for the Church

The presidents of Catholic Religious Australia and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference say the adoption of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards marks the latest milestone in the Church's ongoing response to child sexual abuse.

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd, which was established in early 2017 to develop national safeguarding standards and audit Church authorities' compliance with the guidelines, today released those standards and will later this year begin publishing reports on its audits.

"These National Catholic Safeguarding Standards draw from the Child Safe Standards outlined during the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, but they provide additional criteria relevant to the governance of the Church," CRA president Monica Cavanagh rsj explained.

"The standards will allow Catholic entities and the public to have additional confidence in the Church's approach to addressing the tragedy of abuse and to building a culture of safety for all, especially for the young and the vulnerable."

Archbishop Mark Coleridge, president of the Bishops Conference, said the Church is pushing forward with its implementation of the relevant recommendations of the Royal Commission.

"In December, the Church outlined in our submission to the National Office for Child Safety that much has already been achieved. But more work remains to be done and we are committed to making the changes required," Archbishop Coleridge said.

The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards have been tested with some Church authorities and have been mapped against state legislation and national guidelines, as well as compared with international approaches.

"In addition to what's been done and is being done locally, new guidelines from Pope Francis are helping to strengthen the Church's global response to child sexual abuse – although many of the protocols and processes in place in Australia go beyond what the Pope is asking," Archbishop Coleridge said.

Sr Monica thanked Catholic Professional Standards Ltd for its significant work consulting with key stakeholders, including survivor groups and children, in developing the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

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