

14 December 2020



Ms Rebekah Kilpatrick
Head, National Office for Child Safety

Email: nationalofficeforchildsafety@pmc.gov.au

Dear Ms Kilpatrick,

RE: National Office for Child Safety

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) is committed to ensuring that members within the Surf Life Saving (SLS) movement, particularly children and young people (CYP), can participate in a safe environment. For this reason, SLSA supported, and contributed to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission).

As you are aware, SLSA participated in the Royal Commission and provided information in relation to how our systems, policies, practices and procedures in relation to child protection work and how SLSA receives, investigates and responds to allegations of child sexual abuse.

As Australia's peak coastal water safety, drowning prevention and rescue authority, with more than 180,000 members, the safety of children and young people has been, and remains, a priority for SLSA. Accordingly, we appreciate the opportunity you have given us to report on how we are progressing with the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

Since the Royal Commission, SLSA and its Member States have implemented several resources including an online safeguarding children course. Just recently, the SLSA Board with advice from the State CEOs endorsed in principle, a new Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Commitment.

SLS is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all CYP who are involved in SLS. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish child safe culture and practices in line with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The safeguarding of CYP receives ongoing monitoring by relevant SLS committees, our Executive Management Group and the SLSA Board.

Following the Royal Commission, SLSA implemented the Safeguarding Children and Young People (SCYP) Program. The SCYP Program helps implement best practice policies and standards to protect CYP within SLS. The program also helps SLS promote a culture of importance around protecting CYP from abuse and exploitation. The SCYP Program, in conjunction with external consultants, developed an action list to address the recommendations from the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) and recommendations from 14.1 of the Royal Commission - the implementation of the Child Safe Standards.

Over the past five years, SLSA, in collaboration with its Member States and territories, has been working through the implementation plan for the SCYP Program the following tables on pages two and three provide an update on the current status.

The table below provides a summary of SLSA progress in relation to the ACF recommendations.

	ACTION LIST	STATUS – DEC 20
Rec 1	Establishment of the Member Welfare Committee	COMPLETED
	Development of agreed Terms Of Reference for the Member Welfare Committee	COMPLETED
	Committee chair to report to the SLSA Board on the progress of Committee	ONGOING
Rec 2	General Manager to take the lead as both the Chair and Secretary	COMPLETED
	Development of an agreed SLSA Child Protection Commitment Statement	COMPLETED
	Development of a communications strategy to share information and activities	COMPLETED
Rec 3	Tangible steps to raise the profile of Safeguarding Children and Young People	COMPLETED
Rec 4	Develop expected behavioural guidelines for members and staff	COMPLETED
Rec 5	Incorporation of the National Code of Conduct into key member and staff handbooks, training and inductions	COMPLETED
Rec 6	Finalisation and incorporation of the SLSA Child Protection Statement and National Code of Conduct into existing practices and processes	COMPLETED
Rec 7	Development of recruitment and screening policy and procedure, relevant child safety interview questions and relevant child safety reference check questions	COMPLETED
Rec 8	Development of agreed, standardised wording for use in all staff and member advertisements and position descriptions	COMPLETED
Rec 9	Development of an on-site child safety program	COMPLETED
Rec 10	Development of an onsite train-the-trainer model in achieving child safety in SLS	COMPLETED
Rec 11	Development of a standardised induction program	IN PROGRESS
	Development of an online training option	COMPLETED
Rec 12	Development of a child-friendly SLSA Child Protection Commitment Statement	COMPLETED
Rec 13	Development of tools such as posters for display at clubhouse and change rooms	COMPLETED
Rec 14	Development of designated activities to access feedback on issues of relevance to children and their parents	IN PROGRESS
Rec 15	Implementation of national incident/complaints/allegation categorisation system that has defined recording and reporting hierarchy	COMPLETED

The table below provides a summary of SLSA progress in relation to recommendation 14.1 of the Royal Commission - the implementation of the Child Safe Standards.

ACTION LIST		STATUS – DEC 20
1	Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture	COMPLETED
2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously	COMPLETED
3	Families and communities are informed and involved	ONGOING
4	Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken into account	ONGOING
5	People working with children are suitable and supporting	COMPLETED
6	Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child-focused	COMPLETED
7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training	COMPLETED
8	Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur	COMPLETED
9	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved	ONGOING
10	Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe	COMPLETED

SLS is strongly committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all members, particularly to CYP and we acknowledge the important role we play as an institution in being accountable for our actions to our community, as well as to the public we serve.

Yours sincerely,



Adam Weir
Chief Executive Officer
Surf Life Saving Australia