



Annual Child Safety Statement of Compliance

Commitment to child safety

The department is committed to building a positive and proactive child safe culture to support child safety and wellbeing. It endeavours to ensure children and young people feel safe, supported and respected, and that their rights, needs and interests are met.

The department believes it is the shared responsibility of all employees to keep children and young people safe, and commits to protecting and safeguarding children and young people by:

- creating policies and procedures to protect children and young people
- ensuring all staff are aware of the policies and procedures and abide by them
- creating conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm
- regularly undertaking a risk assessment of all child safety related risks, and acknowledging and managing any child safety incidents effectively
- undertaking requirements of the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (the Framework)
- adopting and implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles).

Department's interaction with children and young people

The department undertakes a number of activities that either directly or occasional involve children and young people. These include:

Direct

- A Vacation Care program that runs four times per year during each school holiday period. The childcare is outsourced to an external approved childcare provider and is held on departmental premises. Departmental activity is limited to administration of the program.
- Departmental endorsed events, stalls and exhibitions whereby children and young people may visit departmental stands, displays and booths.
- Departmental endorsed events whereby children and young people may visit departmental premises.
- Parents occasionally bring children and young people onto departmental premises for short periods while working. For example, to use the carers room between end of school hours and end of work hours.
- Education program for younger children on the basics of biosecurity.
- School/educational institution visits, community events and expos to discuss departmental work.

Occasional

- Departmental staff are located at various locations including airports, cruise ship terminals and passenger clearances to assess biohazard or human health risks of incoming travellers. Children and young people may be present during assessments.

- ABARES Regional Survey Collectors conduct face to face interviews with farmers on the farm premises. Children and young people may be present during interviews.
- On occasions departmental staff participate in search warrants and/or take statements offsite. Children and young people may be present during these activities.
- Departmental staff may have indirect contact with children and young people whilst assisting with security implications or employees working arrangements.
- Christmas parties and team building events where children and young people may attend.
- The department provides grants to state farming bodies to sponsor primary school visits to farms and other primary production worksites to learn about agriculture production, sustainability practices and land stewardship. Departmental activity is limited to development of the grant and does not have direct contact with children and young people.

Child safety risk assessment and mitigation

The department completed its annual child safe risk assessment review on 11 October 2022. The assessment determined our level of risk to be medium.

The key risk to child safety identified in the risk assessment is injury to a child whilst involved in any of the above noted activities. The consequences include:

- Physical injury or abuse
- Psychological/emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Lack of cultural respect, racism or other vilification
- Exposing child to or involving them in sexual acts, direct or indirect sexual exploitation and/or grooming
- Reputational damage
- Other crimes committed

The department has undertaken measures to address and mitigate these risks.

Compliance with the Framework and future improvements

There are four core requirements under the Framework:

1. Undertake risk assessments annually in relation to activities of the entity, to identify the level of responsibility for, and contact with, children, evaluate risks to child safety, and put in place appropriate strategies to manage identified risks.
2. Establish and maintain a system of training and compliance, to make staff aware of, and comply with, the Framework and relevant legislation, including Working with Children Checks (WWCCs) / Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Checks and mandatory reporting requirements.
3. Adopt and implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
4. Publish an annual statement of compliance with the Framework, including an overview of the entity's child safety risk assessment (conducted under Requirement 1).

The department is committed to exercising continuous efforts to be a child safe organisation through implementation of the Framework. The department has demonstrated compliance with Requirements 1 and 4 of the Framework by completing the 2022 Annual Risk Assessment and publicising its Annual Child Safety Statement of Compliance on the department's internet page.

To ensure compliance with Requirement 2 and 3 of the Framework the department will undertake the following child safety measures and activities:

- development of a new policy for the Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry in line with the Framework
- provide child safety training to staff who either work directly with children and young people or may have contact with children and young people as part of their work
- review current recruitment processes for child- related positions
- establish a compliance system that:
 - formally records which positions and staff require Working With Children Checks (WWCC) or Working With Vulnerable People (WWVP) Checks and regularly review position requirements
 - monitor staff adherence to training and WWCC or WWVP Check requirements
 - monitor breaches of the Framework
 - regularly review and update child-safety related policies and procedures.
- run a communication program that informs staff of the following:
 - the Framework as a whole-of-government policy
 - the department's policies in relation to child safety
 - training and compliance requirements.

Application to funded third parties

The department provides grants to state farming bodies to sponsor primary school visits to farms and other primary production worksites to learn about agriculture production, sustainability practices and land stewardship.

The grant agreement for this program includes child safety clauses in accordance with the procurement and grant clause banks.

Signature



Cindy Briscoe
Acting Secretary