



Annual Child Safety Statement of Compliance

Commitment to child safety

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (the department) is committed to fostering a positive, proactive, and inclusive culture that prioritises child safety. The department is dedicated to ensuring that the rights, needs, and interests of children and young people are consistently met, aligning with our broader obligations to integrity, safety, and respect for all.

The department recognises that protecting children and young people is a shared responsibility between the department and its employees. We uphold this commitment by:

- Implementing policies and procedures that support protecting children and young people.
- Ensuring all staff are aware and follow relevant policies and procedures.
- Regularly reviewing child safety related risks and hazards to ensure they remain current, and that controls are effective.
- Responding to child safety incidents promptly and effectively.
- Complying with the requirements of the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework (the Framework).
- Adopting and implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles).

Interactions with children and young people

While the department's direct interaction with children and young people is minimal, there are some activities that directly or occasionally involve them. These include:

Direct

- Department endorsed events, stalls and exhibitions whereby children and young people may visit department stands, displays and booths.
- Department endorsed events whereby children and young people may visit departmental premises.
- Parents may occasionally bring children and young people to departmental premises for short periods, such as using the carers' room between the end of school hours and work hours.
- Educational programs for younger children on the basics of biosecurity.
- School and educational institution visits, community events and expos to discuss the work of the department.

Occasional

- Departmental staff stationed at locations such as airports, cruise ship terminals, and passenger clearances, where children and young people may be present during biohazard or health risk assessments of incoming travellers.
- The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) Regional Survey Collectors conducting interviews with farmers on premises, where children and young people may be present.
- Departmental staff participating in search warrants or taking statements offsite, with the possibility of children and young people being present.
- Indirect contact when implementing security measures at events or the workplace where children or young people are present.
- Christmas parties and team building events where children and young people may attend.
- Departmental grants to external bodies, such as state farming organisations and regional Indigenous groups, to support educational initiatives, including primary school visits to farms and primary production worksites. The department's activities in this context are limited to grant development and does not involve direct contact with children and young people.
- Child protection risks related to activities provided through Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) funds managed by the department.

Child safety risk assessment and mitigation

The department completed its annual child safe risk assessment review on 22 October 2024. The assessment determined our level of risk to be low.

The key risk 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 a child to, or involving them in sexual acts, direct or indirect sexual exploitation and/or grooming
- Reputational damage
- Other crimes committed.

The department has measures in place to address and mitigate these risks.

Compliance with the Framework and future improvements

The department remains committed to being a child safe organisation through ongoing compliance with the [four core requirements](#) under the Framework. The department has demonstrated compliance with Requirements 1 and 4 by completing the 2024 Annual Risk Assessment and publishing this Annual Child Safety Statement of Compliance on the department's website.

To ensure ongoing compliance with the Framework, the department will continue to undertake the following child safety measures and activities:

- Ensure up-to-date policies in line with the Framework.
- Embed the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations into the department's Integrity Framework.
- Continue to provide child safety training to all staff who work directly with, or may come into contact with, children and young people.
- Regularly review recruitment practices for child-related positions.
- Continue to strengthen our 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.
- Regularly communicate to staff about:
 - 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 support educational visits aimed at promoting awareness of agriculture, sustainability practices, and land stewardship. These grants may fund programs such as primary school visits to farms and production sites. All grant agreements for such programs include appropriate child safety clauses, as outlined in the department's procurement and grant clause frameworks.



Adam Fennessy PSM

Secretary

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry