



CDPP

Australia's Federal Prosecution Service

**Commonwealth Director of
Public Prosecutions**

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH
CHILD SAFE FRAMEWORK 2022**



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority for our leadership team and staff with particular emphasis in providing support for victims of child abuse crime.

As Australia's Federal Prosecution Service, we have a significant role and responsibility for ensuring that all CDPP staff treat victims with courtesy, compassion, cultural sensitivity and respect for their dignity and entitlements. Ensuring the safety of children and respecting their rights underpins the important work of this Office.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

The CDPP is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse. The CDPP recognises it is the shared responsibility of all individuals to promote the rights of children and young people in Australia and prevent child abuse.

The CDPP's *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* is guided by the following considerations:

- Recognise children's rights and interests;
- Build and maintain a child safe culture and environment;
- Ensure all staff are aware of and comply with relevant requirements; and
- Provide support and protection to staff who report incidents under this policy.

The CDPP aims to create and maintain a child safe organisation which:

- Empowers and values children and young people;
- Engages with families and the broader community in relation to child safety issues;
- Adopts and implements strategies to ensure the safety of children and young people; and
- Takes appropriate action to promote child safety and wellbeing at all levels of the CDPP.

INTERACTION WITH CHILDREN

CDPP lawyers and external counsel have limited interaction with children. This interaction usually occurs during the process of prosecuting offences against Commonwealth law where the child or young person is a victim of crime. Prosecution of matters involving offences against children will ordinarily have been investigated and referred to the CDPP by either the Australian Federal Police or by State or Territory Police.

Staff from the CDPP's Witness Assistance Service (WAS) have more regular interactions with children. However, the risk of non-compliance with the Child Safe Framework by WAS staff is low given the nature of their role, the type of interactions they have and the risk controls in place.

The usual types of interaction between CDPP staff and children or young people during the prosecution process are as follows:

- Conference to discuss the child or young person's evidence.
- Conference to discuss a prosecution decision, such as a plea negotiation, and to seek their views.
- Guided Court familiarisation tour conducted by Witness Assistance Service staff.
- Verbal and electronic communication from CDPP staff regarding updates on the prosecution.

In accord with the CDPP's *Child Safe Professional Behaviours* another adult is to be present when a CDPP staff member has face to face contact with children or young people. Further a WAS Officer should be present at any meeting/conference between CDPP prosecutors and children/young people.

CHILD SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

The CDPP has conducted a risk assessment and the overall risk rating is **low**.

The risks that have been identified in the risk assessment are:

- CDPP staff or external counsel abusing the relationship of trust with a child or young person whether by direct physical contact or by oral, written, or electronic communication and;
- Failure to comply with Commonwealth requirements and/or obligations under the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

To minimise the risk of harm to a child or young person the CDPP has published a *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*. In particular, the *Policy* sets out a list of *Child Safe Professional Behaviours*. These behaviours apply to all people performing *Child-related* work in the CDPP.

COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD SAFE FRAMEWORK

To the best of my knowledge the CDPP is compliant with the four requirements of the *Commonwealth Child Safe Framework*.

There have been no reported incidences of child abuse involving CDPP staff.

CHILD SAFETY INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN

In ensuring a child-safe environment the CDPP has implemented the following initiatives:

- Published *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* (reviewed and republished November 2022)
- Developed a list of *Child Safe Professional Behaviours*
- Reviewed the risk assessment
- Included *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* requirements to the standard terms and conditions when briefing private Barristers
- The Child Safety Framework included by the WAS Manager in induction and continuing legal education training
- Developed Working with Children Checks Policy and Guidelines

APPROVAL FOR RELEASE/ DOCUMENT OWNER

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VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Author	Description	Next Review
.1	27 October 2022	Rebekah O'Meagher (Assistant Director LCP)	Annual Statement	27 October 2023