



Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Update on the Government of South Australia's response to the 'Working with Children Checks Report'

Each state and territory in Australia has its own scheme for conducting background checks to stop people who may pose a risk to children from engaging in child-related work. These schemes are commonly known as Working with Children Checks (WWCC).

Recent inquiries

National inquiry into Working with Children Checks

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Commonwealth Royal Commission) looked at how WWCC schemes can help prevent child sexual abuse.

The Commonwealth Royal Commission released its WWCC report on 17 August 2015, containing 36 recommendations aimed at strengthening approaches to WWCC in Australia.

South Australian inquiry into Working with Children Checks

From 2014 to 2016, Royal Commissioner Margaret Nyland conducted an inquiry into how well South Australia's child protection laws and policies were keeping children safe, and what should change to better protect children at risk of harm.

The South Australian Child Protection Systems Royal Commission report, '[The life they deserve](#)', was released in August 2016 and presented recommendations aimed at improving the state's WWCC scheme. These recommendations closely align with those delivered by the Commonwealth Royal Commission.

Changes to the law in South Australia

Following the release of 'The life they deserve', new legislation was prepared in South Australia. These laws align with many of the recommendations made by the South Australian and Commonwealth Royal Commissions on ways to improve background screening checks in South Australia.

Child Safety (Prohibited Persons Act 2016 (SA))

The *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA)* (the Child Safety Act) passed Parliament and received Royal Assent on 10 November 2016.

Once the Child Safety Act comes into effect, South Australia's current system of screening will be replaced with a WWCC scheme which aims to:

- minimise the risk to children by the people who work or volunteer with them
- require people to be screened if they want to work or volunteer with children
- create a system of accountability for people working or volunteering with children
- stop people who pose an unacceptable risk to children from working or volunteering with children
- establish a central assessment unit to screen people who want to work or volunteer with children.

Draft Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Regulations 2017 (SA)

New regulations to support the commencement of the Child Safety Act have been drafted, and were open to community consultation in March – April 2018.

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