

Child Safe Organisations Bill 2024

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1 July 2024

The Honourable Charis Mullen MP
Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for
Multicultural Affairs
Parliament House
Brisbane, QLD 4000
Via email: cssc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister

Response to the Child Safe Organisations Bill 2024

Cairns Regional Council welcomes the introduction of the Child Safe Organisations Bill 2024 and appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on this critical legislative proposal. We commend the Queensland Government's commitment to enhancing the safety and wellbeing of children in organisational settings and ensuring that those who are at risk of or have experienced abuse receive appropriate, trauma-informed support.

The Bill's alignment with the recommendations from the 2017 final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is particularly commendable. Implementing mandatory compliance with the 10 Child Safe Standards, based on the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and the Universal Principle for cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, reflects a best practice approach to child protection and safety.

Cairns Regional Council fully supports the objectives of the Bill and recognises the importance of establishing robust frameworks to protect children. The 10 Child Safe Standards provide a comprehensive and proactive approach to preventing child abuse and ensuring child safety within organisations. These standards, which include child safety policies, codes of conduct, and regular training for staff, are essential for creating safe environments for children.

The Universal Principle for cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is particularly significant for our region, given our large First Peoples population. Ensuring cultural safety and respect is integral to providing effective and appropriate care and safeguarding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

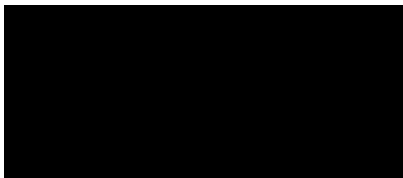
While the Council supports the Bill, we also recognise the challenges that organisations may face in implementing and maintaining compliance with the new standards. Adequate resources, training, and support will be necessary to ensure that all organisations, particularly smaller and community-based entities, can effectively meet these requirements. We urge the Queensland Government to consider the provision of funding and support mechanisms to assist organisations in this transition.

To ensure the effectiveness of the Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle for cultural safety, continuous monitoring and evaluation will be essential. Cairns Regional Council advocates for the establishment of clear and transparent mechanisms for reporting, assessment, and accountability. Regular reviews and updates of the standards, informed by ongoing research and feedback from stakeholders, will be crucial in maintaining high levels of child safety.

In conclusion, Cairns Regional Council strongly supports the Child Safe Organisations Bill 2024 and its aims to safeguard the wellbeing of children across Queensland. We are committed to working collaboratively with the Queensland Government, community organisations, and other stakeholders to implement these important reforms. Together, we can create a safer, more supportive environment for all children, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Should you require further information or wish to discuss our submission in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact Council's Director of Lifestyle and Community, Destry Puia, on the above phone number.

Yours sincerely



Cr Amy Eden
Mayor