

Missionaries of God's Love safeguarding audit published

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The Missionaries of God's Love (MGL) has evidenced strong compliance with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, according to a safeguarding audit report released by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) today.

The audit found that MGL had either implemented or was substantially progressed in the implementation of all 108 (100 per cent) of the indicators relevant to them under the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS).

CPSL CEO Sheree Limbrick said that this is an impressive result given that MGL are a relatively young religious institute, with two seminary formation houses and with members working in a variety of ministries, including as parish priests in Catholic dioceses across Australia.

"The results show what can be achieved with targeted effort. As MGL performs a variety of mission works, including youth ministry and street ministry, having these safeguarding practices in place is critical."

"There were a range of notable strengths identified. The audit found that MGL is well progressed in the development of a formal risk management framework, which includes its Australian activities as well as ministries in the Philippines and Indonesia. Overseas personnel have a strong understanding of safeguarding requirements and how these can be practically applied within their local context."

"The audit also found that MGL has strategies in place for engaging with children, carers and families to obtain feedback on safeguarding policies and practices. This is an area where dioceses and religious institutes often struggle, yet it is an area which the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse identified as a key element of a child safe organisation. The MGL audit evidenced comprehensive surveys, consultations on safeguarding and on-going dialogue with families and youth groups."

"Another strong finding related to safeguarding education and training. MGL has developed a formal, online training program which covers the NCSS and is supported by a series of videos on various topics, including their Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Policy, Complaints Procedure, risk assessment and record keeping. These videos make the training program easily accessible for all MGL members across Australia and overseas."

"The audit also found that significant effort has gone into identifying risks in the online environment and establishing robust procedures and expectations regarding the safe use of technology. This includes the development of a training module which specifically addresses the current challenges of ministering in a digital environment during the COVID-19 pandemic."

"As well as these strengths, our audit team identified areas which MGL will need to further refine and have provided them with seven recommendations to strengthen their existing safeguarding practices," Ms Limbrick said.

CEO Sheree Limbrick is available for interview. The full audit report can be read on our website [here](#).

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Catholic Professional Standards Ltd is a not-for-profit public company, limited by guarantee. It was established by the leadership of the Catholic Church during the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to develop national safeguarding standards, to audit the compliance of Church Authorities with those standards and to publicly report the results. CPSL has a lay Board of Directors with sole responsibility for the content and publication of audit reports.

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