

- MEDIA RELEASE -

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Safeguarding is fundamental to the work of National Council, St Vincent de Paul Society

In April, St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of Australia undertook a significant safeguarding audit which demonstrates their high level of maturity, compliance and commitment to safeguarding all who participate in their services.

The audit was conducted by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited (ACSL) and examined activities of St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of Australia Inc.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is an international lay Catholic organisation of men and women founded in France in 1833 by a group of Catholic lay people who formed the first Conference. The Society is Catholic in its origins, and its Mission is steeped in Vincentian spirituality and Catholic Social Teaching.

The Society in Australia consists of over 1,000 Conferences, that make up Diocesan/Central/Regional and State and Territory Councils. The National Council Australia is the Superior Council of the Society in Australia. Through a national council, six state councils and two territory Councils. National Council Australia decisions are binding upon all Conferences and lower Councils in Australia.

ACSL CEO Dr Ursula Stephens said the audit demonstrated that there is a philosophy of safeguarding and service that underpins the work of National Council.

“NCSS safeguarding audits are more than just a tick the box exercise, they actually provide the opportunity for church entities to evaluate how they can be creating and supporting more welcoming and safe communities to deliver good works,” Dr Stephens said.

“ACSL’s audit team have identified some minor areas for improvement for National Council Australia that will further embed their safeguarding practices.” National Council has already implemented several of the recommendations and this work will continue over the next 12 months.

St Vincent de Paul National Council Australia was assessed against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and generally does not provide direct ministries or services that engage with children or adults at risk.

National President, Mark Gaetani, said “The Society across Australia has worked hard to introduce the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards to all our activities and entities. National Council, acting as the Church Authority on safeguarding matters, is pleased to have received a positive report of the recent external audit conducted by ACSL. We look forward to a continuing strong working relationship with ACSL.”

The full safeguarding audit report for St Vincent de Paul National Council Australia is available on ACSL’s website.

ACSL works with Catholic entities to promote and oversee a nationally consistent, comprehensive and sustainable framework for the protection of children and adults at risk within the Church in Australia.

Media contact: info@acs ltd.org.au