



Stakeholder Reference Group

Communique 16 – October 2021

ECU SRG membership:

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Helen Ransom, Aboriginal Program Officer – Vocational Learning
Australian Childcare Alliance	Mel Reid-Prewer
Catholic Education Tasmania	Kate Turner, Education Officer, Early Years
Centre based care - long day care	Chis Symons, Centre Director, Rainbow Childcare and Early Learning Centre
Centre based care - OSHC	Kellie Lohrey, Director, Groovy Kidz Childcare Centre & OSHC
Local Government provider representative	Kate Whitbread
Early Childhood Australia, Tasmania Branch	Annette Barwick
Early Childhood Educators of Tasmania	Sandra Mazengarb
Family Day Care Council Tasmania	Angela Stanley-Gasparin
Independent Schools Tasmania	Mark Seager, Early Years Consultant
Out of Scope services	Lyn Long, Playcentre Co-ordinator, Possums Playcentre
United Workers Union	Gwen Alcock, National Strategic Coordinator – Early Childhood, United Workers Union
Parent/family representative	Position vacant

The ECU SRG met in October 2021. The information below reflects the discussion and outcomes from the meeting:

1 ECU Update

1.1 Staffing update

Hidajeta Vlaskovac has been appointed as an Authorised Officer from our recent recruitment process.

Jann Williams left her role as Authorised Officer with the ECU in September. Estelle Clerk, Operations Manager Strategy and Policy has commenced a period of extended leave. There will be a recruitment process to fill this position until February 2023.

Brian Cheong has been recruited as the Policy and Communications Officer and he will commence his role in the ECU on 15th November 2021.

1.2 Compliance

Targeted Campaign

The ECU is undertaking a Targeted Campaign with the Family Day Care (FDC) sector focusing on FDC that is being provided from a registered area on the FDC property that is not strictly part of the residence (e.g. converted garage, shed etc) to ensure the area is habitable, and meets the requirements of the NQF.

1.3 Assessment and Rating

A&R reports

The ECU's A&R report pilot is progressing well. The pilot provides an alternative approach to writing and formatting reports. Changes considered incorporate principles of accessibility and readability to ensure the A&R reports are clear and can assist services with their continuous improvement journey.

Targeted feedback from those included in the pilot will be sought in the following weeks.

1.4 Policy update

The ECU policy work is driven at a national level. A significant portion of this currently relates to the progression of the [2019 National Quality Framework \(NQF\) Review](#).

The Decision Regulations Impact Statement (DRIS) is currently being drafted with the support from all governments and Tasmania is actively involved in this space. It is anticipated that the DRIS will be endorsed by Education Ministers in March 2022 and published for the sector. The decision outcomes will be implemented in 2023.

[The National Workforce Strategy](#) has been published on the [Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority \(ACECOA\) website](#). 'Shaping Our Future' acknowledges and builds on the significant investment by all governments to date in workforce related initiatives, and a range of recent and ongoing initiatives launched by the sector. The Strategy has been co-designed by all Australian governments and national sector stakeholders with the intent to support the recruitment, retention, sustainability and quality of the children's education and care workforce over the next 10 years. This 10-year timeframe recognises the complexity of the workforce challenges faced by the sector and provides the opportunity to progress actions in the short, medium and long term.

2 ECU Grants Update

The [ECU's Grants](#) area includes:

- Recurrent Grants – for Occasional Care services licensed under the Child Care Act
- Minor Infrastructure Grants – operational grants that have a targeted focus each round
- Project Grants – focuses on professional development, in various forms, for the sector

The ECU fund the Quality and Safety Immersion program, Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) Scholarships and Early Years and School Aged Care (EYSAC) Workforce Strategy as well as other professional development opportunities and resources distributed to the sector.

The ECU do not envision hosting another ECT Scholarship round this financial year.

3 2021 meetings

Next meeting is scheduled for 14 December 2021. We encourage providers, services, educators, families, and communities to contact their SRG representatives, should they wish to raise any issues for consultation or provide information to the ECU. Details of [SRG members](#) can be found on the [ECU website](#).

Vidhya Chelliah
Manager, Education and Care Unit
Strategy and Performance
Department of Education