

Stakeholder Reference Group

Communique 19 – June 2022

ECU SRG membership:

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	Helen Ransom, Aboriginal Program Officer – Vocational Learning
Australian Childcare Alliance	Mel Reid-Prewer
Catholic Education Tasmania	Donna Bucher, Assistant Director Education Projects
Centre based care - long day care	Chris 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, Glenorchy City Council
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	Tracey Roberts, 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 June 2022. The information below reflects the discussion and outcomes from the meeting:

I ECU Update

1.1 Staffing update

Hidajeta Vlaskovac has been appointed as Authorised Officer on a permanent basis. Subsequent recruitment is underway for an Authorised Officer on a fixed-term basis. Elli Liddell has been appointed as Project and Administration Officer on a fixed-term basis until June 2023.

1.2 Compliance

The ECU has observed an increase of incidents that are related to [inappropriate discipline and inappropriate interactions with children](#), and these are consistent with National trends.

In addition to conducting investigations into these incidents or complaints the ECU is raising awareness of this trend with services and approved providers, in an effort to encourage reflection of practice and support or training for educators before these incidents occur.

Another frequently reported incident in Tasmania and nationally is around the provision of known allergens to children. We would like to raise approved providers and services awareness to encourage proactive reflection and review of procedures and educators practice to minimise future incidences.

- [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia website](#)
- [Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy \(ASCI\) website](#)

We encourage approved providers and services to be aware that some of the compliance issues may be arising from pressure and staff fatigue. To support the wellbeing of your staff the following resources may be helpful.

- [Supporting Educator Wellbeing Infosheet](#)
- [Mental Health Council of Tasmania website.](#)

1.3 Assessment and Rating

Due to the impacts of COVID-19 in the early months of 2022, Assessment and Rating visits are running behind schedule. Moving into the second half of the year the ECU will be aiming to reduce the backlog of A & R's.

From 1 July the ECU will be instigating more partial reassessments to provide accurate and more current ratings of service quality.

2 2019 National Quality Framework Review

The 2019 NQF Review Decision Regulation Impact Statement was released on 8 June 2022 and can be accessed through the [2019 NQF Review website](#).

The 2019 NQF Review assesses whether objectives of the NQF are being met, key issues facing the NQF and makes proposed improvements to the NQF system. The purpose of the NQF Review is to ensure the NQF remains current and continues to lift quality of practice in the education and care sector.

The DRIS summaries the issues, options considered by governments, recommended changes to practice and recommended changes to the National Law and Regulations following public consultation.

Most changes are to commence from mid-2023, with some new regulatory requirements for example, transportation likely to come into effect from early 2023.

Key changes will include:

- New safety requirements
- Improved oversight and compliance tools for Regulatory Authorities
- New workforce requirements
- Improved regulatory guidance

The ECU recommends providers and services begin to review the upcoming changes recommended from the review on the [Explore the DRIS website](#).

ACECQA will provide more detailed information to explain the changes over the coming months.

3 2022 meetings

Next meeting is scheduled for 6 September 2022. 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](#).

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