

Annual Report

2024-2025

Protecting consumers by improving professional standards.

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About this report

Our annual report informs the public, parliament, Ministers and other stakeholders of who we are, what we do and what we have achieved. We summarise our work and activities for the period of 12 months ending on 30 June 2025 (Section 1), the annual reporting of occupational associations on the operation of their professional standards schemes (Section 2), and our structure, governance and financial statements (Sections 3 and 4). The annual report also includes illustrations of our work and looks to the year ahead. This and earlier annual reports are available at psc.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

The Professional Standards Councils acknowledge, respect and value Aboriginal peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We acknowledge their history here on these lands and their rich contribution to our society.

Professional Standards Councils Overview

Our vision

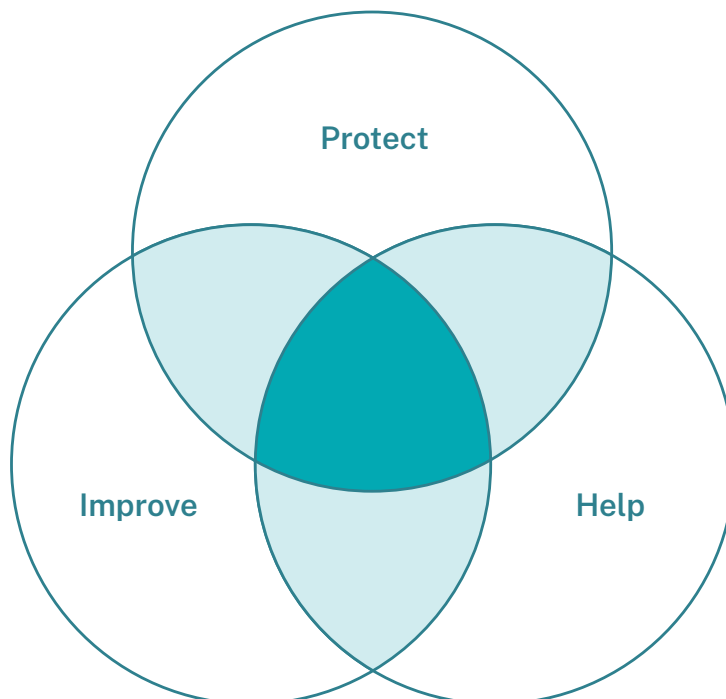
Professional and occupational associations lead the way in continuously improving the high standard of professional services to Australian consumers.

Our mission

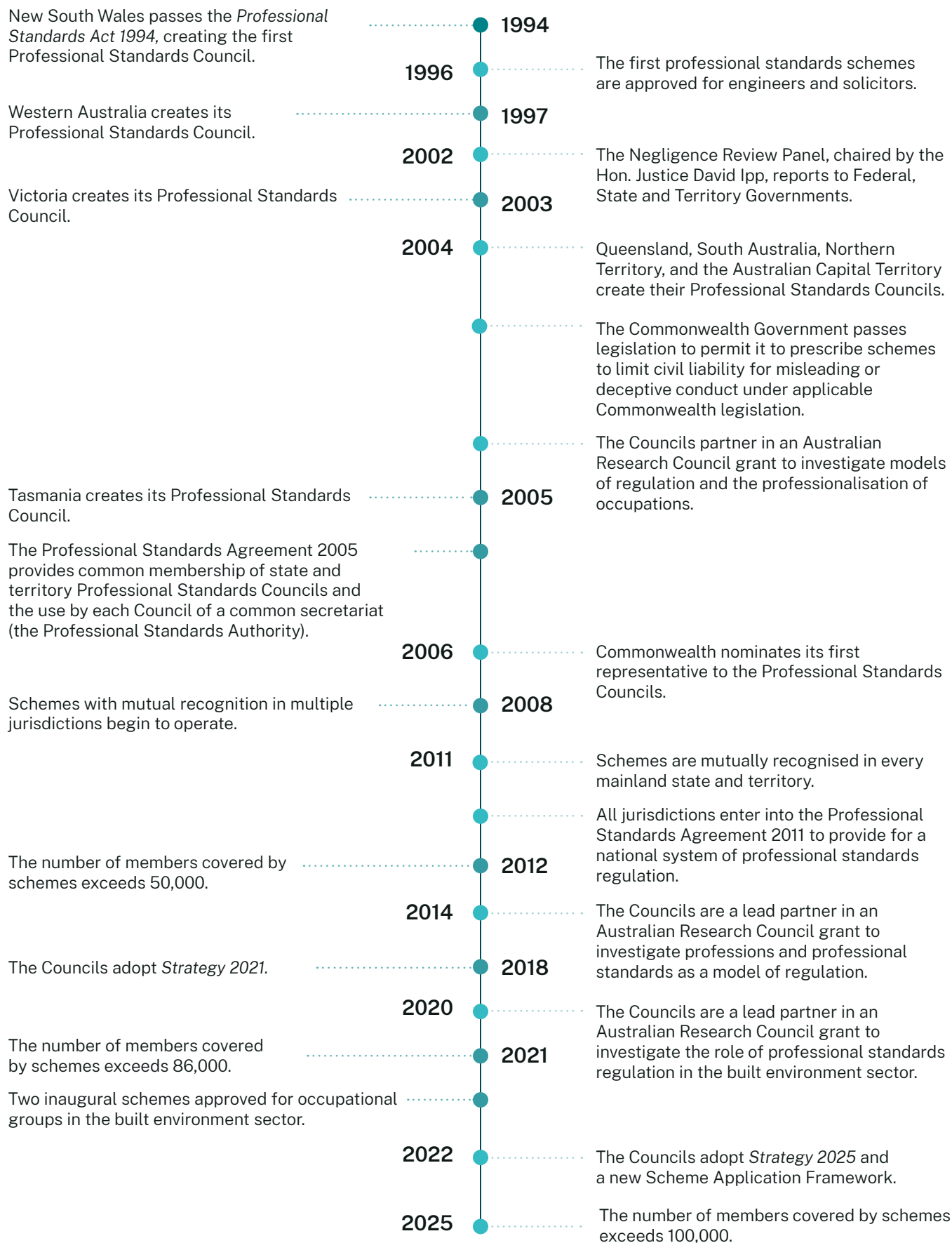
Regulating associations to facilitate and promote consumer protection through improvement in professional standards under professional standards schemes.

Our work

The Professional Standards Councils work with associations to help them improve their professional standards by implementing risk management strategies and regulatory systems. The Councils commission research, provide regulatory guidance and assistance and conduct forums. We aim to promote engagement and improvement in the areas of professional standards, consumer protection, professional indemnity insurance, codes of ethics and conduct, and risk management.



A timeline of our history



The origins of professional standards legislation

Following the economic challenges of the 1980s and 1990s, professional indemnity insurers were retreating from the market. Consumers were at risk of receiving services from insured providers at higher and higher costs, or from uninsured providers with no protection for consumers at all.

Governments recognised a need for an efficient and cost-effective system to raise the occupational standards of professionals and others, and to provide for some guarantee of compensation for consumers.

Professional standards legislation establishes a meta-regulatory regime. The Councils regulate the occupational associations which in turn regulate their members. As a meta-regulator, the Councils approve and supervise the professional standards schemes under which associations set professional standards and undertake occupational risk management.

Following the passage of the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW), the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales was formed, with Western Australia following in 1997.

The reach of professional standards legislation was extended following the collapse in 2001 of insurance giant, HIH Insurance Limited, resulting in widespread unavailability and unaffordability of professional indemnity insurance. This significant event, which affected people across Australia, highlighted the importance of maintaining liability practices to protect consumers.

Professional standards legislation was passed, and Councils were established in each remaining Australian state and territory.

Subsequently, the Commonwealth Government passed legislation that permitted the civil liability of occupational association members to be limited under the *Trade Practices Act 1974* (now the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*), the *Corporations Act 2001* and the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001*.

This national system of meta-regulation requires occupational associations with approved professional standards schemes to regulate their members effectively, address risks to consumers and continuously improve the professional standards of their members. In return, members' liability is capped to promote the availability, quality and affordability of insurance, and the availability of funds for compensation.

“In addition to the function of considering applications for schemes, the Professional Standards Council will have a general function to monitor and to report on the operation of this legislation and a charter to promote good ethical behaviour and to encourage and to assist in the development of professional standards.”

The Hon. John Hannaford AM, then NSW Attorney-General, when introducing the Professional Standards Bill, September 1994.

Letter of transmittal to Ministers

The Hon Tara Cheyne MLA

Attorney-General
Minister for Human Rights
Minister for City and Government Services
Minister for the Night-Time Economy
Australian Capital Territory

The Hon Dr Daniel Mulino MP

Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Financial Services
Commonwealth of Australia

The Hon Anoulack Chanthivong MP

Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading
Minister for Industry and Trade
Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology
Minister for Building
Minister for Corrections
New South Wales

The Hon Marie-Clare Boothby MLA

Attorney-General
Minister for Tourism and Hospitality
Minister for Major Events
Minister for Parks and Wildlife
Minister for Racing
Northern Territory

The Hon Deborah (Deb) Frecklington MP

Attorney-General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Integrity
Queensland

The Hon Kyam Maher MLC

Attorney-General
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector
Special Minister of State
South Australia

The Hon Felix Ashton Ellis MP

Minister for Housing, Planning and Consumer Affairs
Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management
Minister for Skills and Training
Tasmania

The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP

Attorney-General
Minister for Planning
Victoria

The Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA

Attorney General
Minister for Commerce
Minister for Tertiary and International Education
Minister for Multicultural Interests
Western Australia

Dear Ministers

I am pleased to present to you, for tabling in your respective Parliaments, the 2024/25 combined Annual Report of the Professional Standards Councils of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.

The Annual Report is a consolidated volume on the Councils' work and activities over the past year and includes required financial statements for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

It has been prepared in accordance with the relevant professional standards legislation in each Australian state and territory. Jurisdictional statements of compliance are presented in Section 5 of this Annual Report, where required.

Yours sincerely,



John Vines OAM

Chair
Professional Standards Councils

Snapshot of 2024-25

Our year in numbers

18



schemes in force, 17 nationally

5



schemes publicly notified

7



schemes approved

1



scheme extended

2



fee determinations

100,000+

association members subject to schemes, an
increase of 2.3%

Our year in highlights

Approved 7 new professional standards schemes and worked closely with associations to progress applications under the Scheme Application Framework.

See pages 29-30

Received positive stakeholder feedback with a Net Promoter Score of 25 for the 2024-25 reporting period.

See page 21



Picture: Workshop discussion at the July 2024 Professional Standards Forum

Progressed a soon to be published report on the experiences of occupational associations in the administration of professional standards schemes, commissioning Griffith University to undertake qualitative research and prepare a report on the benefits of schemes.

See page 44

Recommended reform of the fee payment regime under professional standards regulations to improve efficiency and reduce compliance costs for regulated entities, with changes made under the new *Professional Standards Regulation 2024* (NSW) and other jurisdictions expected to follow.

See page 33

Contributed to finalisation of the Final Industry Report of the Australian Research Council Linkage Project, as a lead contributor, on *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism*, investigating rebuilding trust and confidence in the building and construction sector.

See pages 44-45



Picture: The Final Industry Report on *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism*

Held professional standards forums in July 2024, bringing the Councils together with more than 40 stakeholders to identify lessons, issues and trends in professional standards regulation and in the future world of professional services work.

See pages 43-44



Picture: July 2024 Professional Standards Forum

Chair's message

I am pleased to introduce the 2024–25 Annual Report on behalf of my fellow members of the Professional Standards Councils.

The 2024-25 reporting year was a busy period for the Councils, particularly in delivering on statutory requirements and key objectives.

The Councils' work continued to be guided by the strategic objectives set out in *Strategy 2025*, the Councils' strategic planning document published in 2022. *Strategy 2025* set out the Councils' priorities under three overarching goals:

- extending the professionalisation of occupations through professional standards schemes
- strengthening the value proposition of professional standards regulation
- continuing our active supervision of scheme compliance and performance.

Strategic objectives

With these key objectives in mind, the Councils' focus was on a significantly increased volume of core statutory work in the 2024-25 reporting period. Our work included:

- Delivering a large number of new scheme approvals across the legal, accounting and information technology sectors, with congratulations going to the following seven associations:
 - Law Society of New South Wales
 - Australian Computer Society
 - New South Wales Bar Association
 - Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand
 - Victorian Bar
 - Western Australian Bar Association
 - CPA Australia.

A further association – Surveyors Australia (formerly the Association of Consulting Surveyors National Ltd) – was granted an extension of its scheme for the maximum permissible period of 12 months by the NSW Minister. The Councils acknowledge the time, resources and effort each association put into the application process, and their ongoing commitment to improving professional standards and protecting consumers.

- Promoting collaboration and information-sharing through the delivery of 'foresight forums'. The forums brought together representatives of occupational associations from across the national system of professional standards regulation. The in-person forum included contributions from the Productivity Commission, Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner, and The Ethics Centre, as well as opportunities for discussion of key issues among participants.
- Promoting the benefits of schemes through commissioning qualitative research to assess the effectiveness of schemes in five key areas: limitation of liability, professionalism and professional standards frameworks, risk management, compliance through annual reporting, and complaints and data management. The report of this project will be published soon.

Last year, I reported that the Councils would be facilitating research on advancing risk management, professional standards and regulatory capacity. I was honoured to represent the Councils, as a lead partner organisation, on a three-year Australian Research Council Linkage Project focused on professions in the building and construction sector. The final industry report of the project, *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism*, was published in August 2024. The report, while focused on the building industry, provided insights relevant to professional standards in professions generally.

Thank you to departing Councils members

I would like to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of two long-term Councils members who departed in 2024-25. Ms Caroline Lamb served on the Councils as one of the NSW nominees from April 2018 to September 2024, bringing a wealth of legal and regulatory experience to the Councils' decision-making processes. Ms Catherine (Cate) Wood served on the Councils from July 2018 to June 2025 as the ACT nominee. Cate brought great experience in regulation and governance, and was a valued contributor to the work of the Councils. Both Caroline and Cate will be missed.

Welcome to new members of the Councils

Jurisdictional Ministers have replenished the Councils' membership with excellent appointments. The Councils were delighted to welcome Distinguished Professor Jenni Millbank (NSW) to her first Councils meeting in May 2025. We also look forward to welcoming our newest member, Ms Elizabeth Trickett (ACT), when she attends her first Councils meeting in September 2025. Each will bring the benefit of years of professional experience, regulatory knowledge and fresh perspectives to the Councils' decision-making.

Looking ahead

The theme for the 2024-25 year was delivering on core statutory functions. Operational delivery will continue in 2025-26, but with an additional focus on planning for future success. The Councils will be:

- developing their new strategic plan to replace *Strategy 2025*, setting the overarching direction of professional standards regulation for coming years
- reviewing and consolidating the implementation of our core regulatory documents – the Scheme Application Framework and Annual Professional Standards Report
- finding new and effective ways to improve professional standards and consumer protections through collaboration, knowledge sharing, risk management and regulatory strategies.

Thank you

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Councils members for their input and commitment to meeting our obligations and core objectives over the year. I would also like to thank the staff of the Authority, led by acting Chief Executive Officer Darren Holder, for their great work in supporting the Councils in a high-volume work year, particularly for new scheme approvals.



John Vines OAM

Chair
Professional Standards Councils

About the Professional Standards Councils

There are eight statutory bodies — one in each Australian state and territory — established to administer professional standards legislation. They are referred to collectively as the Professional Standards Councils. The Councils are independent statutory decision-makers which administer the legislation as a national system for professional standards regulation to strengthen consumer protection.

Each Council has 11 members, with agreement from state and territory Ministers to appoint the same 11 members to each Council. This enables the Councils to meet as one body to facilitate uniform national decision-making. New South Wales and Victoria nominate two members each and designate the Chair and Deputy Chair roles, while all other states, territories and the Commonwealth nominate one member each.

The Councils administer the professional standards legislation in each state and territory.



Picture: Councils' members Prof Jenni Millbank, Mr Timothy Mellor, Ms Catherine Wood AM, Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton, Councils' Chair Mr John Vines OAM, Dr Pam Montgomery, Mr Peter Martin, Ms Rachel Webber and Ms Lisa King.

Professional standards legislation

Professional standards legislation provides for the limitation of liability of members of occupational associations in certain circumstances and aims to improve the standard of services provided by those members. It seeks to protect consumers by striking a balance between:

- placing a limit on the amount of civil liability to which a member of an association participating in a scheme may be exposed
- ensuring sufficient compensation is available to consumers for the vast majority of claims where liability results in an award of damages
- requiring associations operating schemes to continuously improve the standards of competence and conduct of their members, so that the quality of services is improved and claims are reduced in quantity and severity.

Limited liability and improved professional standards place downward pressure on insurance costs, benefiting consumers and professionals.

The objects of professional standards legislation are to:



Enable the creation of schemes to limit the civil liability of professionals and others.



Facilitate the improvement of occupational standards of professionals and others.



Protect the consumers of the services provided by professionals and others.



Constitute each Professional Standards Council to supervise the preparation and application of schemes and to assist in the improvement of occupational standards and protection of consumers.

Professional standards legislation as at 30 June 2025

ACT	<i>Civil Law (Wrongs) Act 2002, Civil Law (Wrongs) Regulation 2003, Civil Law (Wrongs) (Fees) Determination 2014</i>
NSW	<i>Professional Standards Act 1994, Professional Standards Regulation 2024</i>
NT	<i>Professional Standards Act 2004, Professional Standards Regulations 2007</i>
Qld	<i>Professional Standards Act 2004, Professional Standards Regulation 2017</i>
SA	<i>Professional Standards Act 2004, Professional Standards Regulations 2021</i>
Tas	<i>Professional Standards Act 2005</i>
Vic	<i>Professional Standards Act 2003, Professional Standards Regulations 2017</i>
WA	<i>Professional Standards Act 1997, Professional Standards Regulations 1998</i>
Cth	<i>Treasury Legislation Amendment (Professional Standards) Act 2004</i>

Councils members

The Councils' members have diverse experience across a range of sectors and specialities, including law, health, financial services, accounting, governance, standards development, risk management, compliance, engineering, auditing, public affairs and regulation.

Members are nominated by their jurisdictions for their qualifications, experience and ability to contribute to the Councils' work. The Chair and Deputy Chair are nominated on an alternating basis by New South Wales and Victoria.

Members' current term of office, photo and short biography are provided below.



JOHN VINES OAM Chair | MBA, BEc, Dip Civil Engineering

John Vines has many years of experience in governance and has been a member of several government boards and inquiries. He is the Chair of Coassemble Pty Ltd, and is a Director of Carroll and Richardson Pty Ltd.

He has been a member and chair of a range of Government and private sector boards as well as Government inquiries and was a member of the Fair Work Commission Minimum Wages Panel. From 1984-2008 he was Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Professional Engineers, Scientists and Managers, Australia

John was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (2001) and Centenary of Federation Medal (2003).

Appointed Chair: 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2027.

Appointed to Victorian Council: 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2027.



LISA KING B.A.Sc-Blt.Env.(IntDes), B.Arch, M.Arch

Lisa King is the Executive Director of the New South Wales Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architecture, having previously held the position of Policy and Advocacy Manager, New South Wales.

With extensive experience in small, medium and large architectural practice, Lisa has utilised this practical working knowledge in recent years to engage with government and key industry stakeholders on behalf of the architectural profession as the New South Wales building industry reforms have come into effect.

Having previous research and teaching experience for the University of Sydney and the Henry Halloran Trust, Lisa advocates for policy outcomes that support consumer protection and equitable, sustainable built environments.

Appointed to New South Wales Council: 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2027.



CAROLINE LAMB BA (Econ), LLB, MBeth, GAICD

Caroline Lamb commenced her professional career as a solicitor at a major commercial law firm. Attracted to commerce, she joined a steel manufacturer as general counsel. An interest in organisational development and corporate operations led to general management, including several executive positions in both the public and private sector.

Caroline established and operated a successful consulting business, becoming recognised for expertise in risk management and organisational change programs. Caroline is currently the Chair of the NSW Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority.

Appointed to New South Wales Council: 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024. Term concluded in reporting period.



PETER MARTIN BA, DipEd, FIAA

Peter Martin brings actuarial expertise and experience to the Councils. Peter was the Australian Government Actuary from 2000–2017 and provided actuarial and related public policy advice to the Australian Government, all of its major departments and agencies and many minor ones.

Peter played a key role in developing the Commonwealth's public policy settings in areas including superannuation, medical indemnity insurance and disability support funding. He undertook several international assignments, including leading a project to modernise Papua New Guinea's insurance supervision regime. He also held statutory appointments, including Designated Actuary to the Future Fund and Reviewing Actuary to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. He is currently Fund Actuary to the Fiji National Provident Fund.

Commonwealth nominee: 19 September 2023 – 20 September 2026.



TIMOTHY MELLOR LLB

Tim Mellor is a lawyer with over 40 years' experience, specialising in litigation. As a partner at a leading law firm, he has developed an extensive practice with a focus on rural and environmental issues, and estate litigation. He also has a practice as an accredited mediator.

In 2018, Tim was the President of the Law Society of South Australia, having served for 15 years in various roles. He is also past state and national president of the National Environmental Law Association. Since 2019, he has consistently been awarded 'Best Lawyers Australia' recognition for Planning and Environment, Native Title and Commercial Litigation in South Australia. Tim is an Officer in the Australian Army Legal Corps in which he holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Appointed to South Australian Council: 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026.



JENNI MILLBANK BA, LLB (Hons), LLM, PhD

Distinguished Professor Jenni Millbank is a legal practitioner and expert in health law and professional regulation. She is the inaugural Chair of the NSW Voluntary Assisted Dying Board.

Professor Millbank also currently serves as a lawyer member of the NSW Dental Council and as a community member on the Registration and Notifications Committee of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia and the Determining Authority of the Professional Services Review.

Appointed to New South Wales Council: 18 March 2025 – 16 March 2028.



DR PAM MONTGOMERY BA (Hons), PhD

Pam Montgomery has many years' experience in developing and promoting robust professional standards in the health sector. She has held several Board positions with government, statutory and not-for-profit organisations. She is currently a Member of the Medical Board of Australia, having been first appointed to that role in 2017. She also provides consultancy services in medical education and standards development.

Pam was formerly the Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Director of Fellowship and Standards at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. She trained initially as a forensic psychologist, working in private and public clinical practice and at Monash University.

Appointed to Victorian Council: 13 November 2023 – 12 November 2026.



TIINA-LIISA SEXTON BCom, FCA, FAICD

Tiina-liisa Sexton is a chartered accountant with a background in risk and financial management, governance and ethics. She has worked in the private, public, academic and not-for-profit sectors, and was the national Professional Standards Adviser in ethics and corporate governance at CPA Australia for 14 years until 2011.

Tiina-liisa is a Community Member on the Paramedicine Board of Australia. She is a former Director of St Giles Society, Housing Choices Australia, Aurora Energy Pty Ltd, Hobart Water and Connect Credit Union.

Appointed to Tasmanian Council: 22 January 2025 – 21 August 2025.



ELIZABETH SHEARER BA LLB (Hons) MLM CF

Elizabeth Shearer is a Brisbane solicitor and a principal of Shearer Doyle Law. She has a strong interest in consumer protection and access to justice. Elizabeth is a former President of the Queensland Law Society and Chair of its Access to Justice / Pro Bono Committee.

Elizabeth is Treasurer of the Law Council of Australia and a Member of its Access to Justice Committee. She is a Director of the Australian Pro Bono Centre, a Member of the advisory committee of the University of Queensland Pro Bono Centre, and a Director of Lexon Insurance.

Appointed to Queensland Council: 4 May 2023 – 3 May 2026.



ROSS SPRINGOLO FCPA, FAICD, FGIA, FCS

Ross Springolo is an experienced governance professional with a depth of transferable skills in administration, compliance and financial management in organisations operating in a highly regulated environment. In a working career spanning 30 years across various sectors, he has held management positions in both regional Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Ross has provided secretariat services to boards and committees for small and large organisations in a range of industries. He is an experienced board director having served on boards of private, government and not-for-profit entities in the Northern Territory.

Appointed to Northern Territory Council: 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026.



RACHEL WEBBER BJuris, LLB

Rachel Webber's primary areas of expertise include corporate and commercial law, with an emphasis on Corporations Act compliance, financial services regulation, managed investments and credit regulation.

Rachel is an Executive Member of the Business Law Section (BLS) of the Law Council of Australia. She also serves as a Member of the BLS Corporations Committee and of the BLS Financial Services Committee.

Appointed to Western Australian Council: 7 November 2024 – 31 December 2027.



CATHERINE (CATE) WOOD AM BA (SocSc), Fellow AIST

Cate Wood is Chair of the Centre for Workers' Capital Pty Ltd and has held many board positions in the profit to member superannuation sector, including as Chair of CareSuper and a Director of the Industry Superannuation Property Trust.

Cate has also served on the boards of the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees as President and Industry Super Australia. She was Chair of Women in Super (WIS) and a Member of the WIS-founded Mother's Day Classic Foundation Board. Cate was a Member of the Victorian Legal Services Board and Chair of the Finance and Investment Committee.

Appointed to Australian Capital Territory Council: 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025. Term concluded in reporting period.



Picture: The Professional Standards Councils June 2025 meeting.

Our operational context

The work of the Councils supports the vital role of professions and occupations in contributing to the overall wellbeing of Australia's economy and society.

The values of professionalism – integrity, competence and service in a client's interests – are at the core of professional standards schemes. Schemes offer limited liability for those who adopt appropriate insurance, risk management and professional obligations, providing an innovative way for associations to enhance consumer confidence in the professional advice provided by their members.



People are able to trust the advice they receive when they know the person providing it has met professional requirements, and that a body such as an occupational or professional association is assuring that person's expertise.

Who we work with

The Councils work together with the Professional Standards Authority and state, territory and Commonwealth departments to deliver the national system for professional standards regulation. The Councils also have statutory functions of providing advice to Ministers on the operation of the legislation and related matters.



The Professional Standards Authority

The Authority provides administrative services, secretariat support and core regulatory functions for, and on behalf of, the Councils.

The NSW Government provides support services to the Councils under an interjurisdictional agreement, hosting the Authority as a business unit of the NSW Department of Customer Service (DCS). The Authority provides advisory, operational and regulatory services to facilitate the Councils’ statutory decision-making and administrative functions. The Authority works with occupational associations that have an approved scheme, and associations seeking to apply for a scheme, to help them:

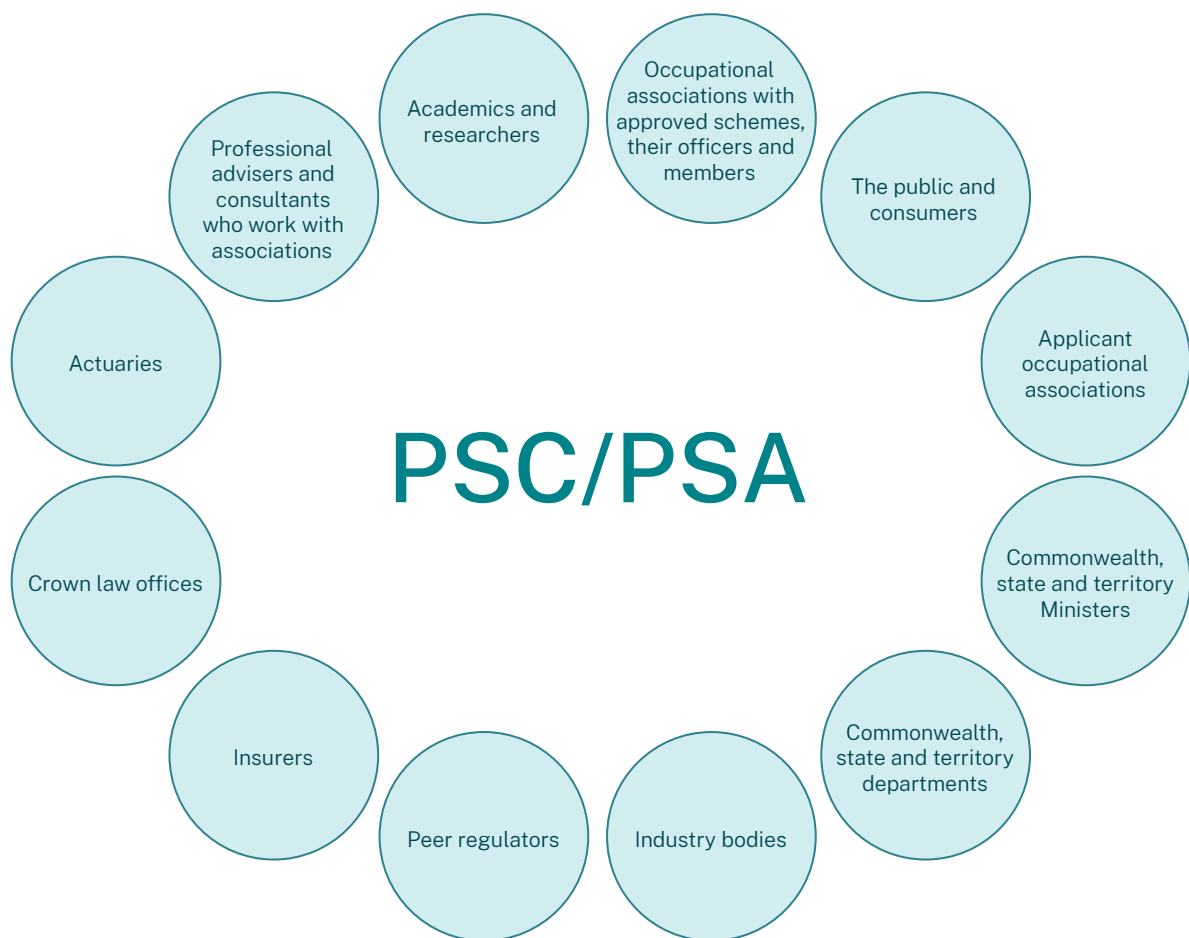
- increase consumer protection
- develop their systems to regulate and improve professional standards
- comply with relevant legislative and related requirements.

The Authority also works across governments to support the Councils and Ministers in each jurisdiction. The Authority assists in financial administration, proper appointment of Councils members, and ensuring the legal requirements are met for the approval and notification of schemes.

Our stakeholders

Engagement with associations and stakeholders is a key element in the effectiveness of the national system for professional standards regulation. The Councils have a unique vantage point to work across professions and occupations to make connections, share lessons and promote good regulatory practice.

The key stakeholders of the Councils are:



Professional standards schemes

Applying for and operating a professional standards scheme is entirely voluntary. Professional standards schemes aim to facilitate the improvement of occupational standards and protect consumers of professional services through risk management, complaints and disciplinary systems, continuing professional development and insurance standards.

Professional standards schemes limit the civil liability of association members who have professional indemnity insurance commensurate with the maximum liability amount specified in the scheme. Importantly, a scheme does not limit liability arising from:

- the death of or personal injury to a person
- a breach of trust, or
- fraud or dishonesty.

Members must comply with their association's insurance standards as assessed and approved by the Councils.

As members of associations may work across multiple Australian states and territories, professional standards legislation provides mutual recognition for approved schemes to operate nationally. This enables members of occupational associations to participate in schemes for services provided in multiple states or territories.

Associations with approved schemes as at 30 June 2025

- Australian Computer Society
- Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
- Australian Property Institute Valuers
- Bar Association of Queensland
- Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand
- CPA Australia
- Institute of Public Accountants
- Law Institute of Victoria
- Law Society of New South Wales
- Law Society of South Australia
- Law Society of Western Australia
- New South Wales Bar Association
- Queensland Law Society
- South Australian Bar Association
- Strata Community Association (NSW)
- Surveyors Australia (formerly Association of Consulting Surveyors National)
- Victorian Bar
- Western Australian Bar Association

Mutual recognition means schemes operate consistently across Australia by enabling a scheme approved in one jurisdiction to operate in other jurisdictions without the need to apply for approval in each jurisdiction.



Picture: (L-R) Councils' members Ms Rachel Webber, Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton and Mr Timothy Mellor.

Section 1

Reporting on the Professional Standards Councils' work and activities

The Professional Standards Councils

The Councils have a leadership role in the promotion of high standards of professionalism in the provision of expert services to Australian consumers

In June 2022, the Councils approved *Strategy 2025*, setting out their priorities as administrators of the national system.

We work closely with associations and our stakeholders to provide encouragement and assistance on a broad range of issues related to professions, professionalism and regulating providers of professional services.

Strategy 2025 sets out the Councils' aims, including that the benefits of professional standards schemes are more widely recognised. We will assist diverse professions and occupations – both established and emerging – to participate in the national system and deliver better outcomes for consumers across Australia.



Strategy 2025

Role	To lead the national system of professional standards regulation by enabling the creation of professional standards schemes, and by assisting and supervising their operation, balancing the interests of consumers of professional services and of professions and occupations.								
Leadership	Our role is supported by sound management of risk and resources, and the development of our core capabilities and stakeholder relationships.								
Strategic goals	Strategic initiatives								
1. Extend professionalisation through professional standards schemes	Encourage the Councils and occupational associations to focus more strongly on consumer protection and communicating the benefits of professional standards schemes to consumers and the community	Raise awareness of the benefits of schemes in protecting consumers, including through better complaints systems of occupational associations and more active engagement with the insurance industry	Develop and implement tailored models that assist smaller or emerging occupational associations to develop professional standards regulatory capacity	Decision makers in government, occupational associations and consumer groups promote & pursue professional standards schemes	Success indicators				
2. Strengthen the value proposition of professional standards regulation to occupational associations	Clarify stakeholder needs and perspectives on what constitutes 'benefit' from professional standards schemes	Invest in data and digital products and services that support the value proposition from the Councils to occupational associations	Design and deliver accessible and usable forums, guidance, research, and resources that facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing	All participating occupational associations are collaborating to share good practice and knowledge to regulatory capacity, consumer protection and professional standards	Performance measures				
3. Actively supervise scheme compliance and performance, standards, and risk management strategies of occupational associations	Engage and equip occupational associations to proactively identify and treat compliance obligations, consumer harms and professional risks	Develop, monitor and manage broad measures of scheme compliance and performance	Analyse long-term trend data to ascertain the level of protection of consumers, of risk management strategies and improvement of standards of members of occupational associations	The Councils monitor compliance with professional standards schemes and publish performance results, including the way occupational risks and consumer harms are treated	Decreasing seriousness in consumer complaints and claims				
Improving participation schemes and members					Improving visibility of schemes and consumer benefits				
Improving accessibility of occupational association complaints systems					Decreasing seriousness in consumer complaints and claims				
Improving stakeholder confidence from occupational associations and others who represent consumer interests, including those in government					Improving accessibility of occupational association complaints systems				
Publication of longitudinal data and trends					Decreasing seriousness in consumer complaints and claims				
Improvements in key performance indicators assessed from occupational association Annual Professional Standards Reports					Decreasing seriousness in consumer complaints and claims				

In this reporting period we dealt with a particularly high volume of applications for new schemes. We continued our focus on implementing the Scheme Application Framework (SAF), reducing duplication and inefficiency in the application process. We also continued to refresh our annual reporting processes. We aim to deliver simpler, clearer ways for associations to demonstrate their regulatory capacity and risk management strategies to meet legislative requirements. The new Annual Professional Standards Report (APSR) Template and Guidance was further refined in 2024, drawing on feedback from the 2023 reporting period. It was required to be used by all associations for the 2024 reporting period (the second successive year of implementation).

We continued to invest in research through an Australian Research Council Linkage Project. Led by Griffith University, the project investigated whether strengthening, reforming or re-positioning professionals involved in apartment design, construction and management can contribute to better governance, higher standards and restored trust.

The research included:

- more than fifty interviews with individual industry professionals
- six focus group sessions with private sector professionals and regulators in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia

- practitioner sessions gathering industry and regulator feedback.

The research findings have been published in the Final Industry Report *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism* (August 2024). A further publication, an academic monograph, is anticipated in the second half of 2025. We expect the research outputs will assist individual professionals, professional associations, policy makers and regulators to improve standards and rebuild trust and confidence in the building industry, and advancing and promoting high standards and effective regulation across all professions generally.

Alongside these strategic initiatives and priorities, we continued delivering our core statutory functions to:

- enable the creation of schemes
- supervise scheme operation
- oversee, encourage and assist associations in the implementation of risk management strategies, the improvement of occupational standards and the protection of consumers.

Our three strategic goals are detailed below, along with our key achievements and outcomes. Further details can be found throughout this report.

Extend professionalisation through professional standards schemes

Actions and results in the reporting period

- Approved seven new professional standards schemes across the solicitor, barrister, accounting and information technology sectors.
- Engaged with five associations regarding prospective applications for their first professional standards schemes.
- Engaged with regulators and Government agencies on areas of common regulatory interest, including through the Tax Practitioners Board Governance and Standards Forum, Commonwealth Treasury Roundtable (Review of eligibility requirements for registration with Tax Practitioners Board) in relation to the accounting/consulting sector; and the NSW Strata & Property Services Commissioner and NSW Fair Trading in relation to the strata management sector.
- Facilitated increased scheme participation, with 100,097 scheme participants representing a 2.3% increase on last year (pages 25-26).
- Sought feedback on the scheme application process to evaluate its effectiveness (page 29).

What's next

- Continue to work with associations with existing schemes, and associations seeking to apply for their first schemes, to increase regulatory capacity, identify and manage risks, and protect consumers.
- Improve visibility of schemes and understanding of consumer benefits through engagement with stakeholders.

Strengthen the value proposition of professional standards regulation to occupational associations

Actions and results in the reporting period

- Commissioned Griffith University to undertake qualitative research and develop a report on the benefits of professional standards schemes, based on the experiences of five associations and the perspectives of industry stakeholders and experts. The report will outline qualitative information on the effects of schemes related to limitation of liability, professionalism and professional standards frameworks, risk management, annual reporting requirements, and complaints. This work builds on previous research that considered the effects of schemes on professional indemnity insurance, claims and consumer complaints experiences.
- Contributed to finalisation of the Final Industry Report presenting research findings and recommendations from the Australian Research Council Linkage Project *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards through Professionalism* and publication of the report in August 2024.
- Facilitated collaboration and knowledge sharing through engagements and delivery of professional standards forums.
- Recommended the Minister make changes to the professional standards regulation in NSW, which reduced the application fee and simplified annual members fees for NSW-based associations, and proposed similar changes to annual fee payments in other jurisdictions (page 33).

Engagement

- Continue to work with associations with existing schemes, and associations seeking to apply for their first schemes, to increase regulatory capacity, identify and manage risks, and protect consumers.
- Improve visibility of schemes and understanding of consumer benefits through engagement with stakeholders.

	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
Presentations and events	4	8	7
Stakeholders engaged	69	63	80

The Councils' website and social media channels continue to be valuable mediums for disseminating resources and information to encourage and assist stakeholders. Website and social media statistics for the reporting period include:

	2024-25	2023-24 ¹	2022-23
Website page views	97,352	56,626	79,478
Website sessions	68,458	33,026	26,632
Website users	58,497	22,333	25,642
New LinkedIn follower increase	6%	9%	30%

Each year we measure stakeholder satisfaction with our services through a survey.

A stakeholder satisfaction survey for the July 2024 forums was analysed, and used to evaluate delivery.

Professional standards forums

	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23
Net promoter score ²	25	40	49
Overall engagement	90%	80%	92%
Relevance	80%	84%	83%

What's next

- Deliver a professional standards forum with a practical focus on discussing challenges and risk management issues, risk identification and analysis to inform risk management strategies.
- Publish the qualitative report by Griffith University on the benefits of professional standards schemes.
- Assist with finalisation, publication and promotion of a monograph on research findings and conclusions from the Australian Research Council Project: *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism*.
- Review and develop revised guidance material to assist with the administration of professional standards schemes.

Note 1: Website analytics were unavailable for a period of months in this reporting period, reducing the number reported.

Note 2: Net Promoter Score is a customer satisfaction measurement taken from asking customers how likely they are to recommend your product or service to others, expressed as a number from -100 to 100. The Net Promoter Score provides an overview of our stakeholders' experience. Bain & Company, the creator of the Net Promoter Score system, suggests that scores above 20 are considered favourable.

Actively supervise scheme compliance and performance, standards and risk management strategies of occupational associations

Actions and results in the reporting period

- Published observations on trends and improvements in key performance indicators assessed from occupational associations' APSRs in our combined Annual Report.
- Implemented a revised APSR Template and Guidance for the 2024 reporting year.
- Engaged with 13 associations on compliance and risk issues, annual reporting feedback and requirements.
- Obtained positive feedback survey results on the 2023 APSR [see section 2].

What's next

- Engage with occupational associations to encourage and assist them to proactively identify and address risks and meet compliance requirements.
- Continue to revise and improve the annual reporting and feedback process.
- Continue to look at ways to reduce the regulatory and resource burden on associations with professional standards schemes, especially unnecessary duplication.

Leadership: our role is supported by sound management of risk and resources, and the development of our core capabilities and stakeholder relationships.

- We delivered an operationally balanced budget, with expenses constrained to (or less than) revenue.
- The Chair, Councils members, CEO and Authority officers engaged with a range of stakeholders in the reporting period, maintaining relationships and building awareness.
- The Councils farewelled two members: Caroline Lamb (New South Wales) and Catherine (Cate) Wood AM (Australian Capital Territory) at the end of their terms of appointment, and were replenished with two new members, Distinguished Professor Jenni Millbank (New South Wales) and Ms Elizabeth Trickett (ACT) appointed by respective Ministers.
- A strong focus on statutory functions and resourcing issues constrained progress on some planned activities in our research and resource development agenda. These will be advanced in the next reporting period as appropriate.

Future outlook

We have an important program of scheduled and proposed work for the year ahead, including:

- Developing the Councils' new strategic plan to replace *Strategy 2025*, outlining the Councils' priorities and strategic direction.
- Publishing a report of qualitative research conducted by Griffith University into the effects of schemes, relating to limitation of liability, professionalism and professional standards frameworks, risk management, annual reporting requirements, and complaints.
- Continuing to deliver a significant volume of regulatory work, including scheme applications and reporting analysis.
- Promoting the Australian Research Council Linkage Project findings and conclusions, to be published in a monograph to help inform development of professional standards regulation and the role of associations.
- Continuing to work with peer regulators and governments on issues and proposed reforms in particular industry sectors as required.
- Continuing to work with policy officers across jurisdictions to progress proposed changes to fee payments under professional standards regulations.
- Delivering a practically focused professional standards forum on challenges, risk identification and analysis.
- Advising responsible Ministers on how professional standards legislation could be improved nationally to:
 - promote consistency and efficiency across jurisdictions
 - expand the reach of professional standards schemes

Reporting on professional standards schemes

CEO's report

This section of the Annual Report presents a summary of how associations are fulfilling their responsibilities in the operation of their professional standards schemes and implementation of risk management strategies. It also reflects the work of the Authority on behalf of the Councils.

Our work with associations

Over the course of the 2024-25 reporting period, we engaged with 15 associations on scheme applications, one association on a scheme extension, two associations on additional risk reporting, and supervised 18 associations in operating their schemes and complying with professional standards legislation. The total number of association members participating in a scheme during the period increased to approximately 100,097 (up from over 97,000 for the previous reporting period).

Our primary focus for the year was on delivering on core statutory requirements, particularly a high volume of scheme applications, but we maintained our work on continuous improvement of professional standards throughout the period.

Association annual reporting

Associations with approved professional standards schemes must submit an Annual Professional Standards Report (APSR) to the Councils for the previous calendar year. These reports contain information under five categories: highlights, informing members and consumers, protecting consumers, responding to consumer complaints and claims, and scheme administration. The reports must be approved by the association's chief executive officer (or equivalent) and governing body, typically represented by the chair/president. All but one association submitted their annual reports on time for the 2024 reporting period, the second period in which all associations used the APSR Template and Guidance.

A key area of focus for the Councils is risk identification and mitigation by associations. The annual reporting process administered by the Authority requires associations to set out how they identify risks (claims data, complaints, compliance monitoring, cooperation with regulators and so on), conduct analysis (using risk analysis methods) and mitigate risks (through measures such as continuing professional development, disciplinary mechanisms and others). The Councils particularly encourage the use of root cause analysis as a risk analysis tool. This year's reporting indicates that, while a high proportion of associations are undertaking risk analysis, not all have a good understanding of the concept of root cause analysis. This will be an area of focus in this and future reporting periods.

Encouraging and assisting associations

We delivered professional standards forums with a focus on emerging trends which pose future challenges for professions, regulators and society more broadly. These included artificial intelligence, organisational models, declining trust, climate change, political and economic uncertainty and demographics. Participants enjoyed informative and thought-provoking presentations from the Productivity Commission, the Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner, and The Ethics Centre. This facilitated lively discussion, knowledge sharing and collaboration among participants on challenges and possible solutions.

We met with various associations about their regulatory obligations, challenges they face in administering schemes and issues in particular sectors. We also contributed to an association's membership publication to promote better understanding of professional standards schemes.

Improving efficiency

In recent years, the Authority has assisted the Councils in identifying ways to do our work more efficiently and effectively –including ways to minimise duplication and reduce regulatory burden on occupational associations. This has led to the development and implementation of the Scheme Application Framework (SAF) and APSR, both of which aim to ensure all relevant and necessary information is provided to the Councils while reducing duplication and required resourcing.

This year, the Councils took the opportunity provided by the automatic repeal of the *Professional Standards Regulation 2019* (NSW) to recommend that the Minister make changes to improve the statutory fee payment regime. Associations with schemes approved in NSW will now only need to run reports and make payments once a year, rather than four times a year. This will deliver significant efficiency gains for associations and the Authority, and will hopefully be replicated in other jurisdictions in coming months.

Thank you

At the time of writing, recruitment is underway for my replacement and I am approaching the end of my term as acting Chief Executive Officer. I would like to thank the Councils for the excellent leadership and clear direction they have provided to the Authority over the year. I would also like to thank the staff and managers of the Authority, some of whom have gone above and beyond this year in working outside of their usual roles to ensure we performed all our core functions to the requisite standard. It has been very much appreciated.



Darren Holder

Acting Chief Executive Officer

Professional standards schemes overview

Each professional standards scheme is a regulatory instrument with a maximum duration of five years, with a possible extension of no more than 12 months. The legislation does not permit automatic renewal of a scheme. If an association wishes to maintain continuity between the end of a current scheme and commencement of the next scheme, the new scheme must be approved and commence prior to the date the current scheme will expire.

The legal requirement to apply for a new scheme every five years (six if extended) requires the Councils to regularly have regard to the mandatory considerations set out in professional standards legislation. This facilitates consideration of matters including claim levels, risk management strategies and occupational risks, as well as the appropriateness of proposed limits of liability.

As at 30 June 2025, there were 18 schemes in force as approved under state and territory professional standards legislation. The number of association members subject to these schemes during the reporting period has increased to approximately 100,100 (up from 97,853 during 2023-24).

Figure 1:

Number of persons by state and territory in professional standards schemes

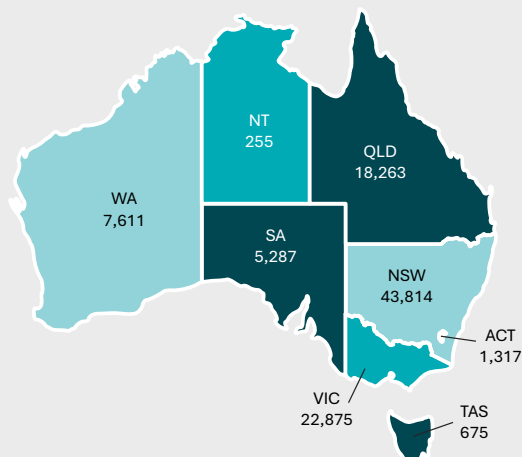
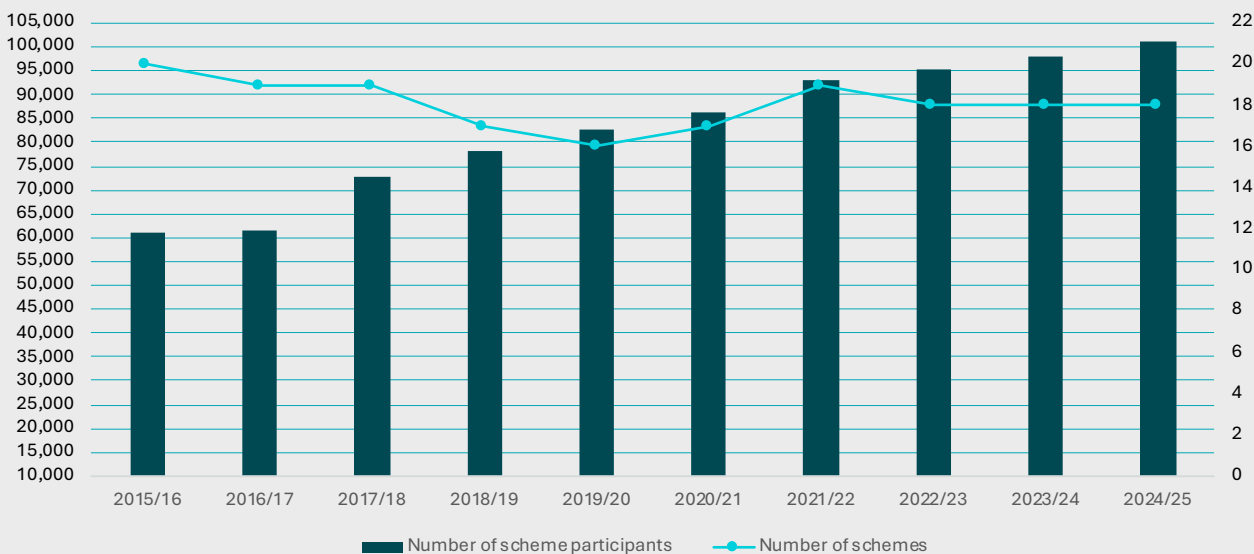


Figure 2:

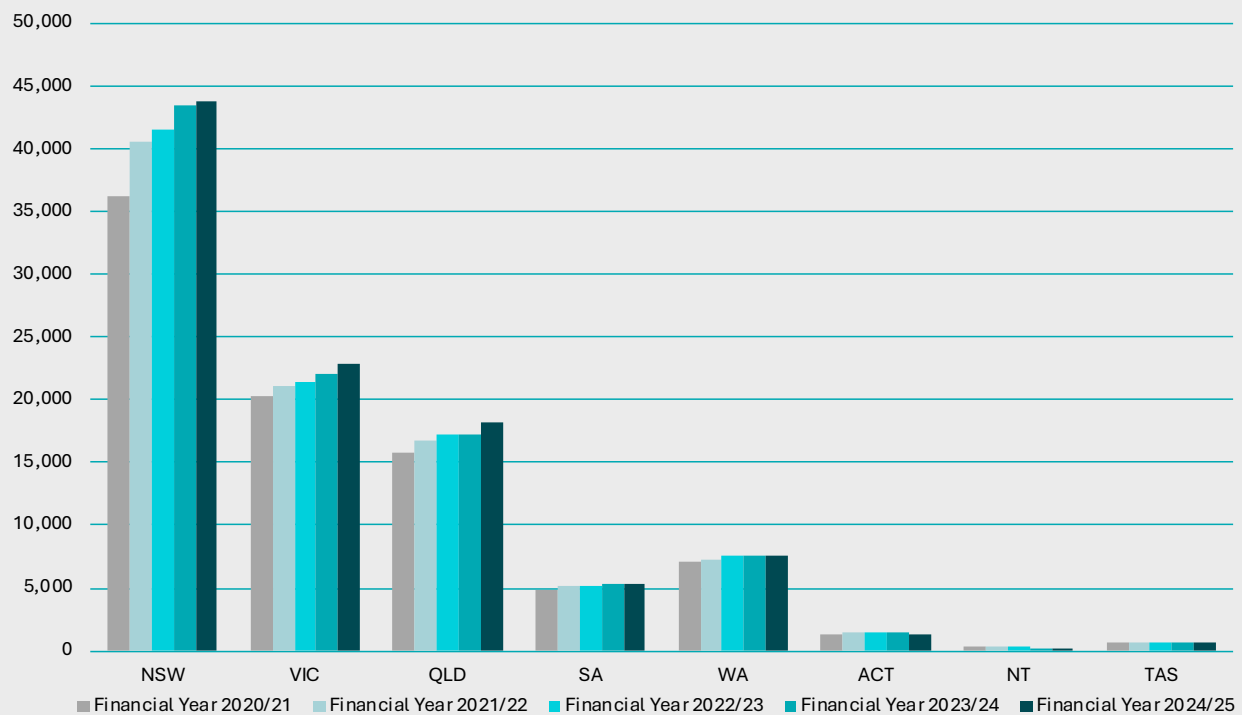
Number of members in associations operating a scheme over the past 10 years



The above graph includes prior financial years scheme participation adjustments, as provided by associations.

Figure 3:

Number of persons by state and territory in professional standards schemes over the past five years



The above graph includes prior financial years scheme participation adjustments, as provided by associations.

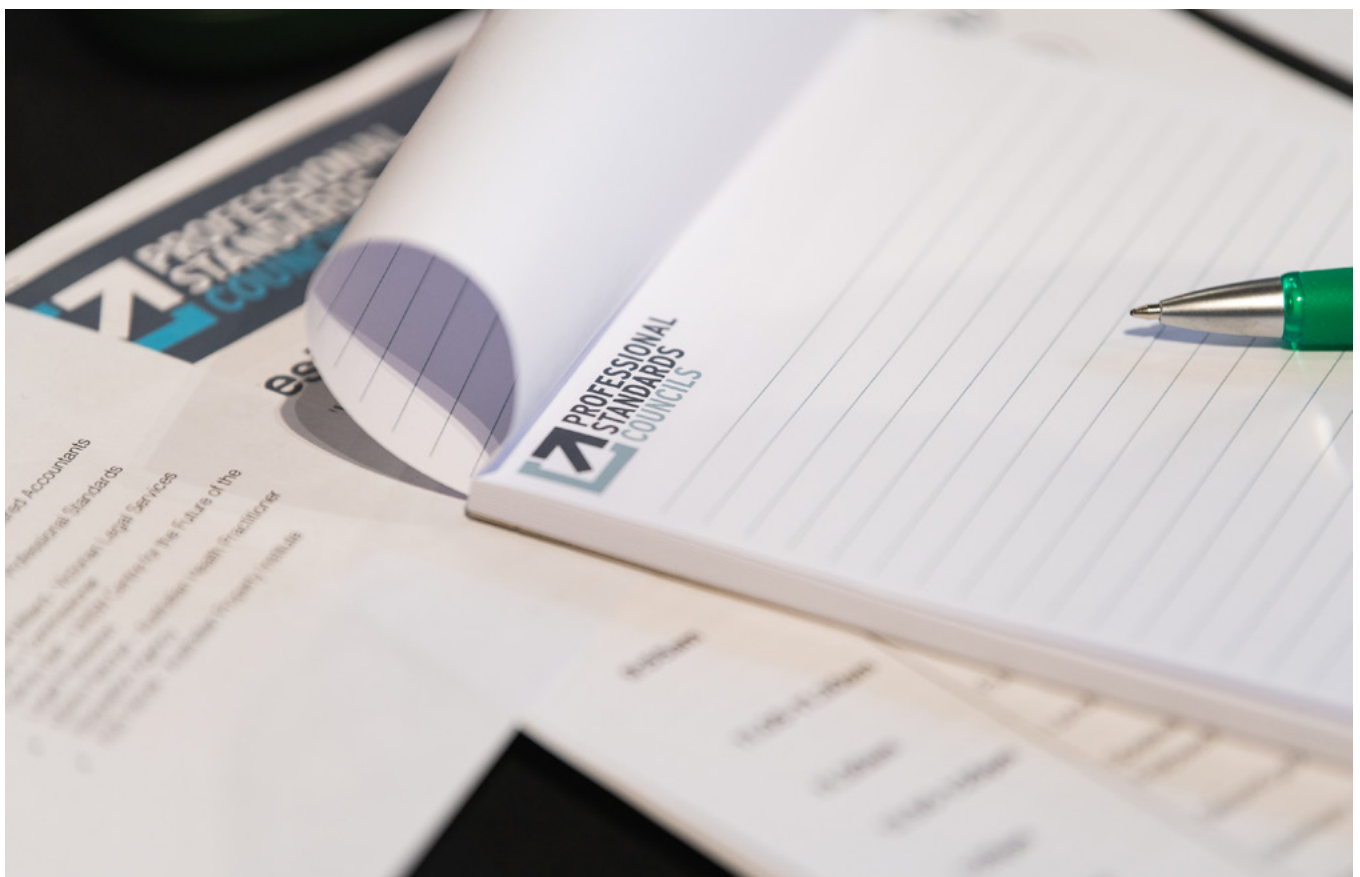


Table 1:

Professional standards schemes mutually recognised in each state and territory during the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Australian Capital Territory					
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	VIC	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			
New South Wales					
Association	Profession	Participants	Limitation liability	Start date	End date
ACS	Information Technology	1,645	\$2m (HDC: \$10m)	01/01/19	31/12/24+
			\$2m (HDC: no limit)	01/01/25	31/12/29
AIBS	Building Surveyors	859	\$1m to \$2m (HDC: \$10m)	01/07/21	30/06/26
CA ANZ	Accountants	32,808	2m to \$75m (HDC: \$75m)	13/07/19	12/07/25+
CPA	Accountants	7,329	2m to \$75m (HDC: \$75m)	21/08/19	20/08/25+
LSNSW	Lawyers	20,832	\$1.5m to \$10m (HDC: no limit)	22/11/18	21/11/24+
			\$1.5m to \$10m (HDC: no limit)	22/11/24	21/11/29
NSW Bar	Barristers	2,319	\$1.5m	01/07/20	30/06/25
SAus	Consulting Surveyors	348	\$2m to \$10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/20	30/06/26+
SCA	Strata Managers	2,118	\$750k (HDC: no limit)	01/07/21	30/06/26
Mutual recognition	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	Vic	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			
Northern Territory					
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	Vic	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			
Queensland					
Association	Profession	Participants	Limitation liability	Start date	End date
BAQ	Barristers	1,076	\$1.5m (HDC: \$50m)	01/07/24	30/06/29
QLS	Lawyers	8,200	\$1.5m to \$10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/22	30/06/27
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	Vic	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			

South Australia					
Association	Profession	Participants	Limitation liability	Start date	End date
LSSA	Lawyers	1,811	\$1.5m to \$10m (HDC: \$50m)	01/07/22	30/06/27
SABA	Barristers	260	\$1.5m (HDC: \$50m)	01/07/22	30/06/27
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	Vic	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			
Tasmania					
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	Vic	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			
Victoria					
Association	Profession	Participants	Limitation liability	Start date	End date
APIV	Property Valuers	4,268	\$1m to \$10m (HDC: \$20m)	01/09/21	31/08/26
IPA	Accountants	5,058	\$2m to \$10m (HDC: \$75m)	01/01/22	31/12/26
LIV	Lawyers	6,898	\$1.5m to \$10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/22	30/06/27
Vic Bar	Barristers	1,644	\$2m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/19	30/06/25+
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	WA	LSWA, WABA			
Western Australia					
Association	Profession	Participants	Limitation liability	Start date	End date
LSWA	Lawyers	2,310	\$1.5m to \$10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/24	30/06/29
WABA	Barristers	314	\$2m	01/07/20	30/06/25
Mutual recognition	NSW	ACS, AIBS, CA ANZ, CPA, LSNSW, NSW Bar, SAus			
	Qld	BAQ, QLS			
	SA	LSSA, SABA			
	Vic	APIV, IPA, LIV, Vic Bar			
Total	100,097				

+The expiration date of this scheme was extended by the responsible Minister on application by the occupational association (which may only occur once for each approved scheme term).

Making, approving, amending or revoking schemes

An occupational association makes an application for a scheme to be considered for approval by the Council of its home jurisdiction. The Councils consider scheme applications for approval under the relevant professional standards legislation, which provides for each state and territory Council to act cooperatively with one another in the exercise of their statutory functions.

If an application for a scheme is approved, the approving Council submits the approved scheme to the responsible Minister in each of the jurisdictions in which the scheme is intended to apply. The responsible Minister may then authorise the approved scheme to be notified in the relevant Government gazette, to commence from the date stipulated within the instrument and notice. More detail on the steps required for a scheme application is set out below.

Scheme application

In 2022, the Councils released the Scheme Application Framework (SAF). The focus of the SAF is on obtaining all information necessary for the Councils to consider as part of the approval process, while minimising duplication and required resources. The SAF provides a set of guidance documents and templates to facilitate associations applying for a scheme. It currently includes six modules (and 13 submodules) covering the following areas:

- Module 1: Readiness to operate a professional standards scheme
- Module 2: Cover letter and attachments (including a draft scheme instrument, insurance standards, public consultation document and scheme compliance plan)
- Module 3: Eligibility (considering consumers and consumer harms for the occupational association)
- Module 4: Professional risk management strategies (including codes of ethics and practice, consumer complaints system and disciplinary system)
- Module 5: Members' claims data (relating to professional indemnity insurance claims, cost and availability)
- Module 6: Annual Professional Standards Report (setting out the annual reporting requirements).

Each module and submodule has an overview explaining its context and the high level requirements for completion. Many modules also include guidance which provides further information on regulatory best practice, why we ask for the information, and how we will use it to assess the application.

The SAF's modular structure assists associations to scope and manage their application by enabling the association to complete and submit each module and submodule separately. Further, for associations with an existing scheme, the SAF simplifies the application process by allowing the association to focus on improvements made over the duration of the current scheme, and utilise information previously provided where appropriate.

Nine associations have now completed an application under the SAF. Feedback from the associations indicates:

- a high level of satisfaction with the SAF process, with an average satisfaction score above eight out of 10
- associations considered the Authority provides good support and assistance to applicants, with an average score of nine out of 10
- associations feel confident and supported in administering their schemes, with an average rating exceeding eight out of 10.

Several responses noted the SAF improved and simplified the application process. Responses welcomed the modular nature, reduced duplication, extensive guidance and the ability to reference material provided previously.

Public notification

Before approving a scheme, the Councils must publicly invite comments and submissions on the proposed scheme by publishing notices in state and national newspapers. Any interested stakeholder or members of the public may submit comments, which are provided to the Councils. The Councils also alert potentially interested stakeholders by email and through online state and territory government public consultation websites, where possible.

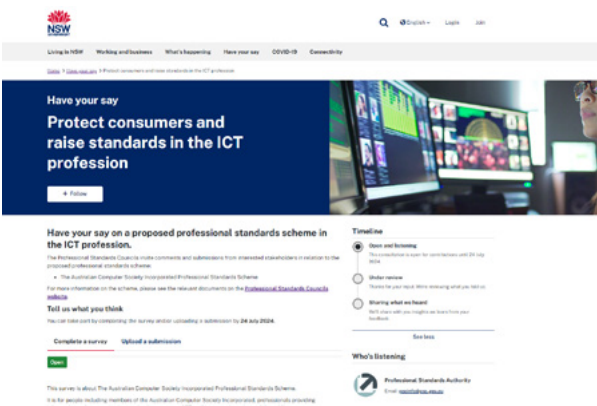
The notice in the newspaper is to:

- highlight the nature and significance of the proposed professional standards scheme
- advise where the scheme can be obtained and viewed
- invite comments and submissions to be provided in a period of not less than 21 or 28 days (depending on the state and/or territories where the scheme is intended to operate).

A public notification document is prepared by the association (based on the Councils' SAF template) to articulate the purpose and vision for its professional standards scheme.

The proposed scheme, the newspaper notice and a public notification document are published on the Councils' website.

During the 2024-25 reporting period, five schemes were publicly notified, each in relation to a replacement for a scheme due to expire. A further two schemes were publicly notified during the previous reporting year with the consultation period continuing into the reporting period.



Picture: A public notification for the Australian Computer Society proposed professional standards scheme was featured on the NSW Government 'Have your say' website for public consultation

Scheme approval

Once the relevant Council is satisfied that the applicant is an 'occupational association' for the purposes of professional standards legislation (and therefore eligible to apply for a scheme), before approving the scheme, the Council is required to consider:

- all comments and submissions made to it in accordance with the public notification process (as set out above)
- the position of persons who may be affected by limiting the occupational liability of members of the occupational association concerned
- the nature and level of claims relating to occupational liability made against members of the occupational association concerned
- the risk management strategies of the occupational association concerned
- the means by which those strategies are intended to be implemented
- the cost and availability of insurance against occupational liability for members of the occupational association concerned
- the standards determined by the occupational association concerned in relation to insurance policies.

In some jurisdictions, the relevant Council is also required to consider the provisions contained in the proposed scheme for the making and determination of complaints and the imposition and enforcement of disciplinary measures against members of the occupational association concerned.

Where a scheme indicates an intention to operate in another jurisdiction, the Council must also consider any requirement that applies for an application in the other jurisdiction in the context of each of the jurisdictions concerned.

During the reporting period, there were seven schemes approved (see Table 2)

Table 2:

Schemes approved 2024-25

State	Association	Council decision	Commencement
NSW	LSNSW	16 August 2024	22 November 2024
NSW	ACS	6 September 2024	1 January 2025
NSW	NSW Bar	28 February 2025	1 July 2025
NSW	CA ANZ	28 February 2025	13 July 2025
VIC	Vic Bar	28 February 2025	1 July 2025
WA	WABA	28 February 2025	1 July 2025
NSW	CPA	9 May 2025	21 August 2025

Scheme gazettal

When a Council approves a scheme, it advises the Minister responsible for professional standards legislation in the home jurisdiction. The responsible Minister is requested to authorise notification of the scheme according to the applicable statutory requirements. A scheme approved by a Council cannot commence until it has been published in the relevant Government Gazette or otherwise notified with Ministerial authority. This must take place in each jurisdiction in which it is intended for a scheme to apply.

During the reporting period, there were five schemes gazetted in each state and territory. A further two schemes were gazetted in some states and territories during the reporting period.

Scheme recognition under Commonwealth laws

Members of an association who are subject to an approved scheme may have capped civil liability in relation to misleading or deceptive conduct under Commonwealth laws, in the same way that the scheme limits occupational liability under state or territory law. A scheme may be prescribed under Commonwealth regulations for the purposes of the:

- *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth), section 137 (for a contravention of section 18 of the *Australian Consumer Law*)
- *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), section 1044B (for a contravention of section 1041H)
- *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001* (Cth), section 12GNA (for a contravention of section 12DA).

An association may request that its approved scheme be prescribed under regulations for one or more of these three Commonwealth laws. Where an association seeks to have its approved scheme prescribed, the Councils cooperate with the Commonwealth Treasury to facilitate this process.

The following 17 schemes are prescribed under Commonwealth legislation as at 30 June 2025:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Association of Consulting Surveyors National
Professional Standards Scheme (Surveyors Australia) | • The Law Society of New South Wales
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The Australian Computer Society Incorporated
Professional Standards Scheme | • Law Society of South Australia
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
Professional Standards Scheme | • The Law Society of Western Australia
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited
Professional Standards Scheme | • The New South Wales Bar Association
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The Bar Association of Queensland
Professional Standards Scheme | • The Queensland Law Society
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand Professional Standards Scheme | • South Australian Bar Association
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The CPA Australia Ltd
Professional Standards (Accountants) Scheme | • The Victorian Bar
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • The Institute of Public Accountants
Professional Standards Scheme | • The Western Australian Bar Association
Professional Standards Scheme |
| • Law Institute of Victoria Limited
Professional Standards Scheme | |

Scheme expiry and extensions of duration

The duration of a professional standards scheme approved by the Councils cannot exceed five years. The Minister responsible for professional standards legislation in each jurisdiction may extend the expiry date of a scheme, on application by an association, once only for no more than 12 months.

During the reporting period, there was one request for a Minister to extend the period for which a scheme was in force. The Minister approved the extension for the scheme which is now due to expire in the next reporting period. Five schemes expired during the reporting period (with replacement schemes coming into effect).

Regulatory fees

Associations are required to pay an application fee when applying for approval of a scheme and an annual fee calculated on the basis of the number of members of the association who are participants in the scheme at any time during the relevant period. The due date for payment of annual fees is specified by professional standards regulations.

In accordance with the regulations, interest is payable when the payment is received on or after 30 days past due date.

In the 2024–25 financial year, the following fees were received:

- \$20,000 in scheme application fees
- \$4,610,129 in annual fees¹
- \$17,673 in interest payable on overdue annual fees.

Associations paid their annual fees within 30 days of the due date, except for four associations which paid their annual fees late.

Table 3:

Interest on overdue annual fees

Association	State	Interest ²	Fees due	Days late	Annual fee due date
LIV	VIC	\$73	\$5,950	58	30 June 2024
SABA	SA	\$37	\$2,400	31	30 September 2024
SAus	NSW	\$63	\$3,500	36	30 September 2024
CA ANZ	NSW	\$17,500	\$188,650	Multiple periods	Multiple dates

Applications to the Councils for a fee waiver, remission or determination that a fee and/or interest is not payable

An association may apply to the Councils, in writing, requesting a determination that a fee or interest is not payable. The Councils may determine that the whole or any part of a fee or interest payable under professional standards regulations is not payable, if it considers there are special reasons for doing so in a particular case.

There were two statutory determinations for fee or interest waivers in the reporting period made by the New South Wales Professional Standards Council related to:

- determining that anniversary annual fees are not payable for the full 12-month annual fee period
- determining that part of interest payable on historical annual fees is not payable.

In relation to the first request, the Council determined that part of the anniversary annual fees were not payable (with the effect that \$122,047 was not payable). This was to effectively correct an error arising from an incorrect scheme commencement date, which was not the fault of the association, so that the fees payable corresponded to the remaining period of the scheme (avoiding an unintended duplication of annual fee payments).

In relation to the second request, the Council determined that 75 per cent of the interest payable was not payable (with the effect that \$52,500 was not payable). In considering this request, the Council noted the association identified, verified and voluntarily reported an error and rectified the underpayment. The Council also noted the association reviewed the process for determining fee payments, and requested further details regarding improvements to mitigate the risk of future errors, which were provided.

Associations operating professional standards schemes are responsible for ensuring compliance with annual fees payable to the Councils through appropriate governance processes. If an error with annual fee payments (such as an underpayment or overpayment) is identified, the Councils require assurance about the systems in place for determining the number of members subject to a scheme. The Councils publish guidance for associations to help ensure appropriate systems and processes are in place to mitigate the risk of miscalculating annual fee payments.

Note 1: This figure is less than the 2023-24 amount, and an uneven number, due to adjustments made during this period (including those referred to below), and changes to NSW statutory fee payment requirements (see 'Improving the fee payment regime' below).

Note 2: Interest is rounded to the nearest dollar.

Improving the fee payment regime

The Councils have the statutory function of providing advice to each jurisdictional Minister on the operation of the jurisdiction's professional standards legislation.

During the reporting period, the *Professional Standards Regulation 2019* (NSW) was due for automatic repeal and replacement to ensure its provisions, which facilitate the operation of the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW), remain operative.

The replacement regulation – the *Professional Standards Regulation 2024* (NSW) (Regulation) – came into effect on 1 September 2024. The new Regulation included two substantive changes recommended by the Councils:

- reducing application fees from up to \$40,000 (for a national scheme) to \$5,000, to make NSW consistent with all other jurisdictions
- replacing the requirement for *quarterly payments* for new members to whom a scheme became applicable during the quarter with a *single annual payment* for new members to whom a scheme became applicable during the year.

These changes were designed to reduce compliance costs for associations, and improve efficiency and reduce resource burdens for both the associations and the Authority.

Prior to the changes, occupational associations with schemes approved under NSW professional standards legislation were required to make payments each quarter for additional members to whom a scheme became applicable. This meant that associations were required to run reports, reconcile numbers and make payments for new members four times a year.

This placed a considerable administrative burden on these associations, particularly smaller ones. The changes mean that this work is now required only once a year for associations with schemes approved under NSW legislation. These changes have been strongly supported by occupational associations.

The Councils have recommended each jurisdiction make similar changes to replace quarterly payments with annual payments in their respective regulations, as occurred in NSW. Engagement with jurisdictional policy officers indicates that a number of jurisdictions support the changes and intend to implement the same reform.

Implementation and monitoring of association risk management strategies

The Councils supervise professional standards schemes operated by associations for compliance with, and furthering the objects of, professional standards legislation. The supervision function involves monitoring and assessing the performance of schemes, especially through oversight of the effectiveness of occupational associations' risk management strategies.

The aim is to ensure compliance with statutory obligations while encouraging and assisting associations to be forward-looking and focused on continuous improvement in the regulation of association members, including professional standards and the protection of the consumers of their members' services.

The Councils achieve this through a culture of challenge and collaboration, providing guidance to associations on their scheme obligations and on development of their regulatory capacity.

Association annual reporting requirements

Associations operating professional standards schemes are required to submit an annual report to the Councils for the previous calendar year in the following year.

The report requires each association to provide information including:

- highlights (such as actions taken to improve the professional standards of its members and protections for consumers)
- informing members and consumers (about the scheme, compliance with disclosure obligations, how monitoring informs education activities and so on)
- protecting consumers (identifying harms, risk management, standards, any changes to codes of ethics or enforcement, continuing professional development and insurance data)
- responding to consumer complaints and claims, including information on:
 - complaints, such as complaint management systems and monitoring, role of external parties, data gathering and monitoring, learnings and how these were addressed
 - claims, including systems for recording data, adequacy of insurance, monitoring, causes, claims over 50% of the liability cap, learnings and how these were addressed
 - disciplinary action, including processes, role of external parties (such as other regulators), data, monitoring, learnings and how these were addressed

- scheme administration (including information about governance/boards and committees, annual report and financial statements, resources, entry requirements, member agreement, exemptions/higher discretionary caps, member data, compliance plan and others).

The relevance of these matters can vary across occupations. To the extent possible across diverse industries, this information is analysed and compared over time and across associations. This provides the Councils with insights on the operation of schemes and is an important part of the Councils' supervision approach.

Reporting template and guidelines

In 2024, the Councils provided associations with a revised APSR Template and Guidance. Launched in 2022, this integrates and aligns reporting with the SAF and streamlines annual reporting requirements.

All associations were required to use the APSR Template and Guidance for the 2024 reporting year.

The reporting Template and Guidance were revised in 2024 to clarify and provide additional guidance on information to be reported. Additional information and guidance were provided on the reporting process and elements, including related to reviews of compliance and risk management plans, risk management tools and analysis, claims over 50 per cent of the monetary ceiling, complaints and claims data analysis and higher discretionary caps and exemptions.

The refinements and additional guidance responded to feedback provided by associations through the annual satisfaction survey, association enquiries and individual engagements during the year. These engagements and changes aim to support associations in developing regulatory capacity and continuous improvement.

Although only a limited number of associations completed the annual satisfaction survey, the survey results indicate:

- overall, respondents were satisfied with the annual reporting process for 2023, with a rating of eight out of 10
- all respondents found that the APSR for the 2023 reporting year provided an opportunity to focus on changes and trends
- the Councils have been responsive to the needs of the association in the 2023 annual reporting process, with a rating of nine out of 10
- the annual reporting process promoted better engagement between Councils and the association, with a satisfaction rating of 75%
- feedback reflected an understanding of the association and industry risks, with a rating of eight out of 10.

Reporting timeliness

Seventeen regulated associations provided their annual reports on time, with one association's report provided four days past the due date.

Monitoring and assistance actions

The Councils monitor scheme compliance and performance and may take actions concerning association risk management strategies or risks of non-compliance with professional standards legislation.

During the reporting period, the Councils took the following actions:

- providing feedback letters to associations on their 2023 APSR results, identifying areas for continuous improvement
- targeting engagements with associations operating schemes to address identified risks, as well as compliance and performance concerns
- requiring additional risk management reporting in relation to scheme administration and the risk profile of the built environment sector.

The Councils also engage with associations on particular risks and issues identified in an industry or sector as required.

These actions further the Councils' strategic goal to actively supervise compliance and the performance, standards and risk management strategies of occupational associations by:

- engaging and equipping associations to identify and treat compliance obligations, consumer harms and professional risks
- developing, monitoring and managing broad measures of professional standards scheme compliance and performance.

Association annual reporting on schemes

Each association's annual report is analysed to identify areas of achievement and areas for improvement, which are provided as feedback to the association. To the extent possible, information and data reported in the annual reports are also compared by the Councils over time across occupational associations and sectors. This provides the Councils with insights into the operation of professional standards schemes and their efficacy. The Councils are particularly interested in actions taken to address risks.

Accounting

Actions observed across the accounting associations included:

- three associations provided detailed explanations of changes to their rules on conduct, reporting and disciplinary matters in response to identified risks
- two associations broadened their capacity to act on complaints and disciplinary matters in certain circumstances to strengthen regulatory oversight and complaints and disciplinary processes
- one association increased the maximum fine for a breach of its rules five-fold and tripled the amount of ethics Continuing Professional Development (CPD) required every three years, as well as increasing the scope of CPD compliance monitoring
- one association updated its notifications and claims reporting requirements to include notifications and claims of \$50,000 and over, to enhance data collection and assessment to inform risk management activities

Solicitors

Actions observed across solicitor associations included:

- four associations reviewed their professional risks and related treatments plans or risk registers to ensure strategies to address existing risks remain viable, to update the treatments for addressing current risks and incorporate new or emerging risks and strategies as required
- four associations continued to respond to the growing risks associated with cybersecurity breaches and the possible losses that can arise including through best practice guidance, publications, CPD and other educational material and tools
- one association's compulsory insurer offered risk management advisory services to members and conducted more than 1500 individual risk visits to practices nationally

Barristers

Actions observed across bar associations included:

- three associations reviewed and updated the scheme compliance and/or professional risks and related treatment plans or risk registers, adding new or emerging risks and strategies and/or ensuring existing controls were adequate, controls were updated or additional controls were incorporated for existing risks
- three associations strengthened rules and requirements on governance, admission processes and disciplinary procedures
- three associations continued to address the risks associated with cybersecurity and the losses that can arise from breaches including through CPD, guidelines and communications to members
- one association identified a possible issue with members holding an interest in an incorporated legal practice and changed its rules to prohibit this

Built environment and other professions

Actions observed across the built environment/other sector included:

- two associations strengthened complaints handling arrangements through updating processes for reviewing, investigating and addressing complaints and disciplinary matters, including through redefining or introducing oversight of committees
- one association established a system to facilitate engaging with members to provide information about the scheme
- one association continued to work with regulators and authorities in various jurisdictions to promote consistency in pathways to registration, with this being established in one of the jurisdictions during the reporting year
- one association conducted a pilot CPD audit of its members, with recommendations drawn from the audit to enhance guidance to members and better utilisation of CPD activities.

Trends and observations

The data and information provided in the annual reporting from each association has been aggregated and analysed to identify any trends or focus areas, which are presented in the graphs and and observations below. As associations only have access to their own information, this cross-association and cross-profession analysis of data and information provides a macro approach uniquely available to the Councils. Although there are limitations on comparability, this analysis enables the Councils to share insights from the national professional standards system and potential responses with the associations and the professional standards community to inform continuous improvements and the adoption of good practices.

With associations using the APSR format for only the second or third time this year (depending on when the association transitioned to the new format), some data reported is not directly comparable year-on-year and over time. One of the limitations on useful comparability is that, due to the small number of associations, a slight change in figures reported year-on-year can have a disproportionate impact on the overall trends for the sector.

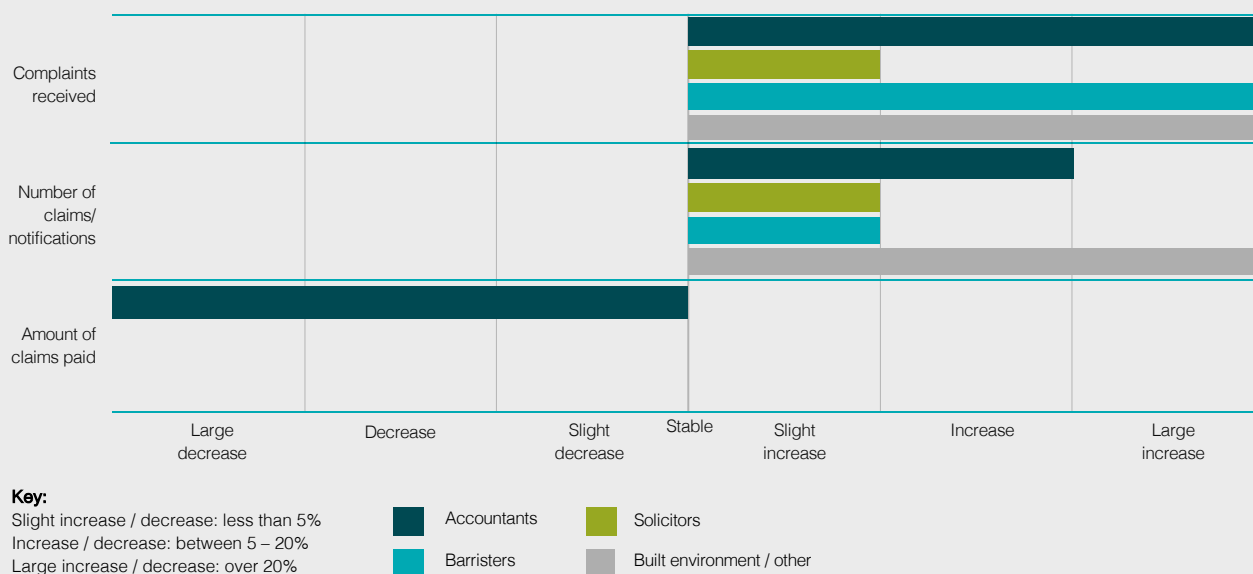
Complaints and claims

The information and data presented within the graph below identifies the trends in complaints and claims reported by associations between 2023 and 2024.

The number of complaints increased in the accounting, barrister, solicitor and built environment/other sectors. The number of notifications and claims also increased across all sectors to differing degrees.

Figure 4:

Industry sector comparison in complaints/claims 2023 to 2024



Explanation of terms

Complaints received

Number of consumer complaints made against members which are dealt with by, or disclosed to, regulated associations in the reporting year, including complaints made against members received by relevant regulators of the occupation.

Number of claims/notifications

Number of professional indemnity insurance claims and notifications made against members collated by insurers and regulated associations in the reporting year from available data sources.

Amount of claims paid

Number of reported settlements paid for professional indemnity insurance claims against association members.

Aggregated data from the information reported by associations in 2024 APSRs suggests an overall increase in total complaints in all four sectors of varying degrees, although not all associations reported an increase.

Associations should analyse complaints and claims data, and any other available information, to identify underlying causes and develop strategies to mitigate areas of professional risk as they emerge. Reporting by associations indicates that analysis is used to inform risk mitigation strategies:

- 2023: 83% of associations reported use of complaints and claims data to inform risk management strategies
- 2024: 89% of associations reported use of complaints and claims data to inform risk management strategies.

While some associations are moving beyond a categorisation of complaints and maturing their approach to data analytics, complaints and the insights they can generate are not yet consistently used by associations to inform risk management strategies.

Root Cause Analysis and Risk Management

As identified in the previous reporting period, associations' analysis of complaints and claims data is developing to include root cause analysis techniques. Identifying the root causes of complaints and claims can better inform risk management responses by helping to ensure that underlying reasons, rather than superficial effects, are correctly identified.

- 2023:
 - 61% of associations reported use of elements of root cause analysis
 - 82% of these associations reported elements of risk management strategies informed by root cause analysis
- 2024:
 - 61% of associations reported use of elements of root cause analysis
 - 91% of these associations reported elements of risk management strategies informed by root cause analysis (we note the increase from last year is due to only one additional association).

While use of elements of root cause analysis is encouraging, we consider that some associations require a better understanding of the methodology. We intend to address this over the coming reporting period, which should further inform and improve risk management strategies in future years.

Professional indemnity insurance

The Councils' reporting requirements encourage sourcing of insurance data and market information (where available) by associations.

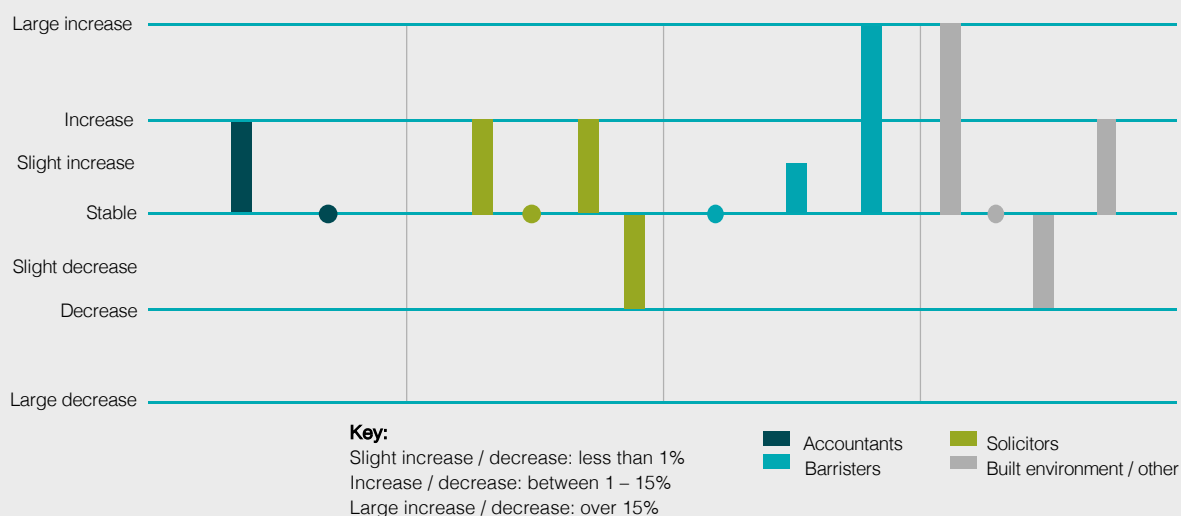
Associations which reported on the insurance market in the 2024 reporting period identified the following observations:

- the risk environment, risk profiles and measures to manage or reduce risks are relevant to the availability and cost of insurance for several sectors
- premia for some association members, and/or professions or sectors, are affected by claims history, including the frequency and severity of claims and claims costs
- premia are influenced by factors such as areas of practice or specialty, income or revenue and claims or disciplinary history for some associations
- global events, economic factors and major weather events were observed by some associations as relevant factors in relation to the insurance market conditions and insurance pricing
- ongoing developments in the availability and costs of policies covering cybersecurity, with some sectors seeing either policies incorporating cybersecurity becoming more common and more inclusive of full cover, or cost softening/decreases due to increased capacity and competition.

The Councils continue to engage with associations, the insurance sector and government regulators in relation to professional indemnity insurance. The Councils' focus is to facilitate and advocate for better utilisation of the benefits of professional standards schemes to improve the availability and affordability of professional indemnity insurance.

Figure 5:

Professional indemnity insurance costs (average premia) comparison 2023-24



Note: **This graph does not provide a comparison between individual associations.** It provides a general overview of the changes in the professional indemnity insurance market and experience for members or scheme participants of associations that have provided comparable information on the change in the average professional indemnity costs in this reporting year. This is presented for each sector, however each individual association's experience within the sector varies. These indicators are sourced from a comparison of current 2024 APSR data against the 2023 APSR data for each scheme association (where available).

Each placement on the graph represents an association that reported comparable information on the average cost of professional indemnity insurance for the 2023 and 2024 annual reporting periods. Whether the average cost of premia in 2024 increased, decreased or remained stable in comparison to 2023 is compared across sectors.

The average cost of professional indemnity insurance increased for members of seven of the 13 associations that provided comparable data in 2023 and 2024. Of these 13 associations, the average cost decreased for two associations and remained stable for four associations.

However, the percentage by which costs have increased or decreased cannot be accurately compared across associations due to differences in the way associations obtain data. This includes:

- comparing the average cost of insurance as a proportion of gross fees/income
- comparing the average premia costs, which are dependent on the size of a practice or limit of professional indemnity insurance
- using member surveys to identify any changes to members' premium costs.

Claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling

Association annual reporting includes data on claims and notifications that exceed 50% of the monetary ceilings specified in an association's scheme.

Claims exceeding 50% of an association's monetary ceiling occurred in the accounting and solicitor sectors. There were 26 claims in 2024 compared to 13 in 2023 and 10 in 2022.

The causes of claims that exceeded 50% of the monetary ceiling included:

- Negligence in communication/advice/administration
- Misappropriation, misleading and deceptive conduct
- Failure to provide service / service quality issues
- Technical issues
- Miscellaneous issues.

Two claims had more than one cause.

Monitoring this information aligns with the Councils' strategic goals to monitor trend data on claims and the appropriateness of limitations of liability.

Figure 6:

Claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling trend comparison: 2023 to 2024

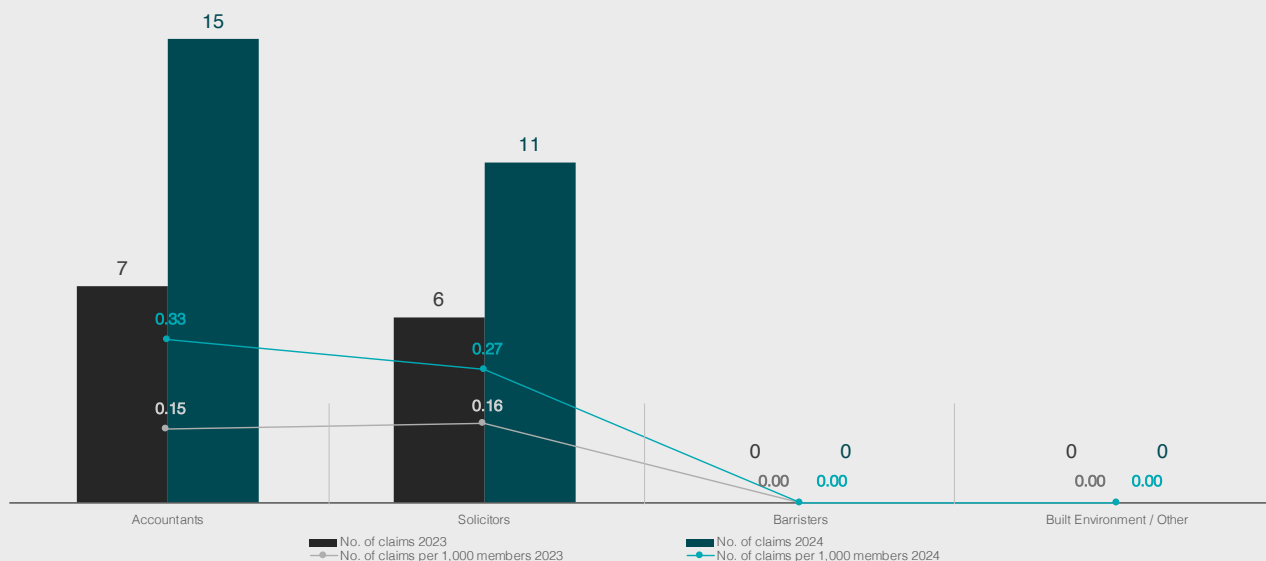


Figure 7:

Claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling per 1,000 members comparison trend: 2021 to 2024

The four-year comparison is based on the number of claims reported across the accountant, solicitor, barrister and built environment/other sectors (between 2021–2024). This provides the trend in claims across all sectors with previous reporting years. We note there were no claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling reported for the built environment/other sector in 2021, 2022, 2023 or 2024 or the barrister sector in 2022, 2023 or 2024.

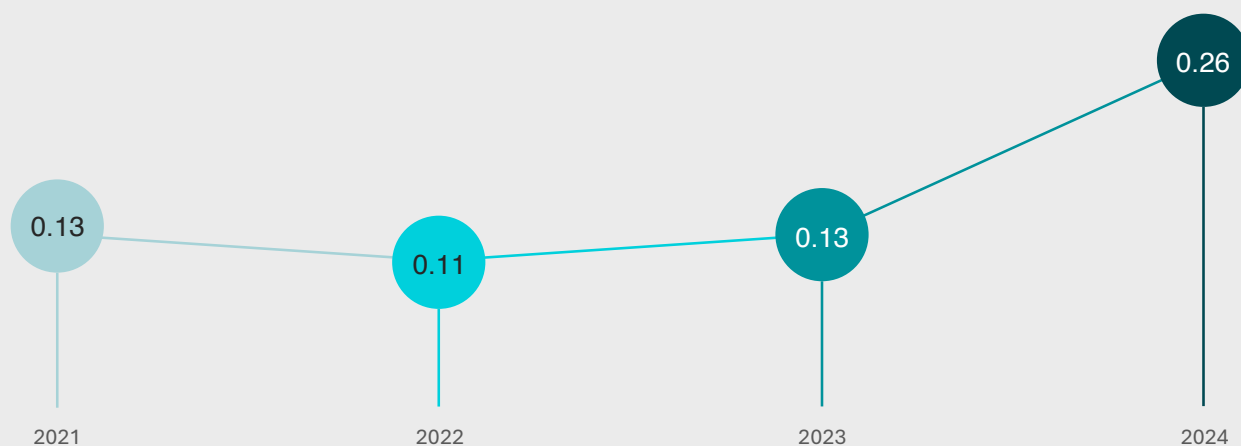
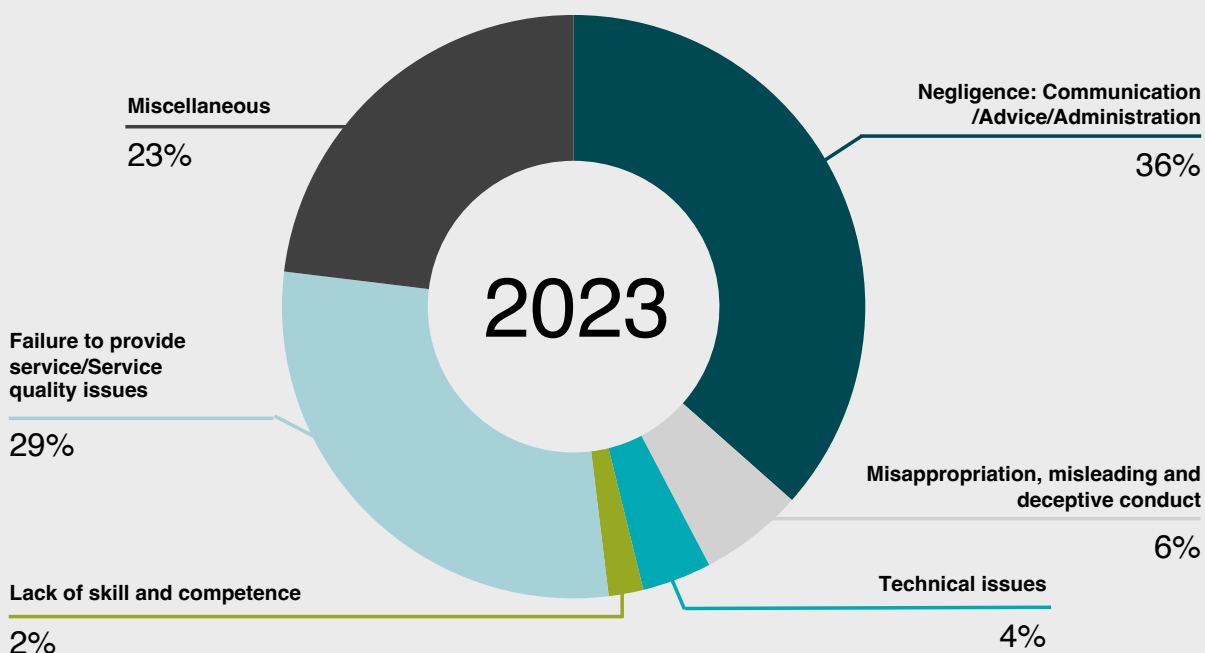
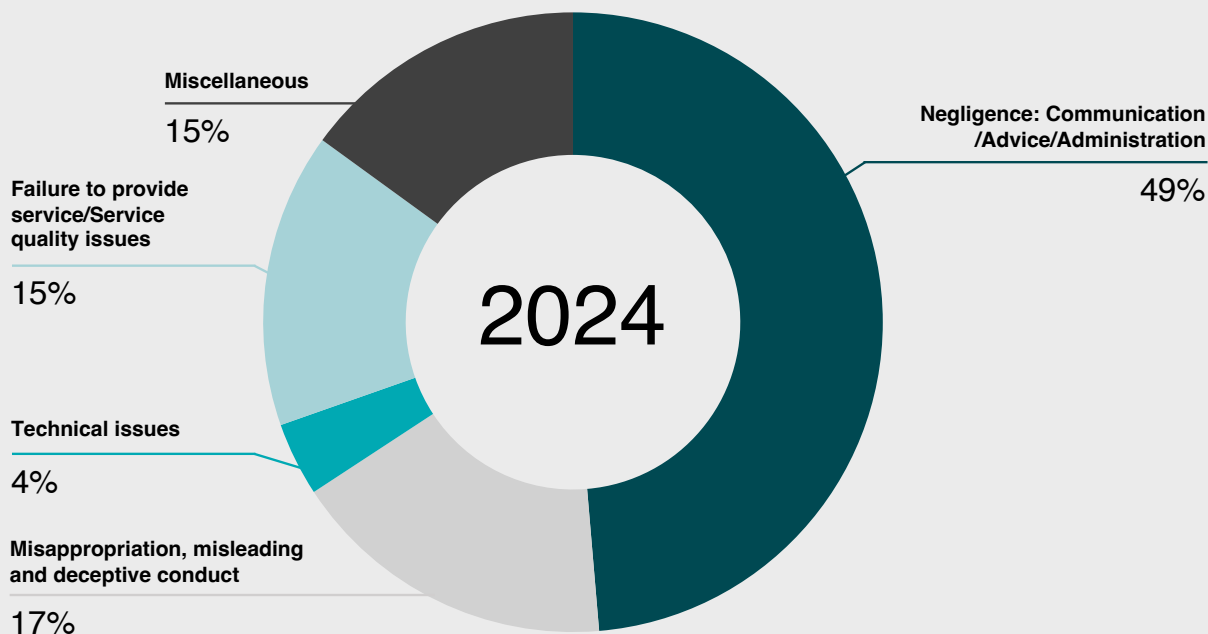


Figure 8:

Causes for claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling

The following graphs categorise the causes of claims reported by associations for the 26 claims reported in 2024 and 13 claims reported in 2023.

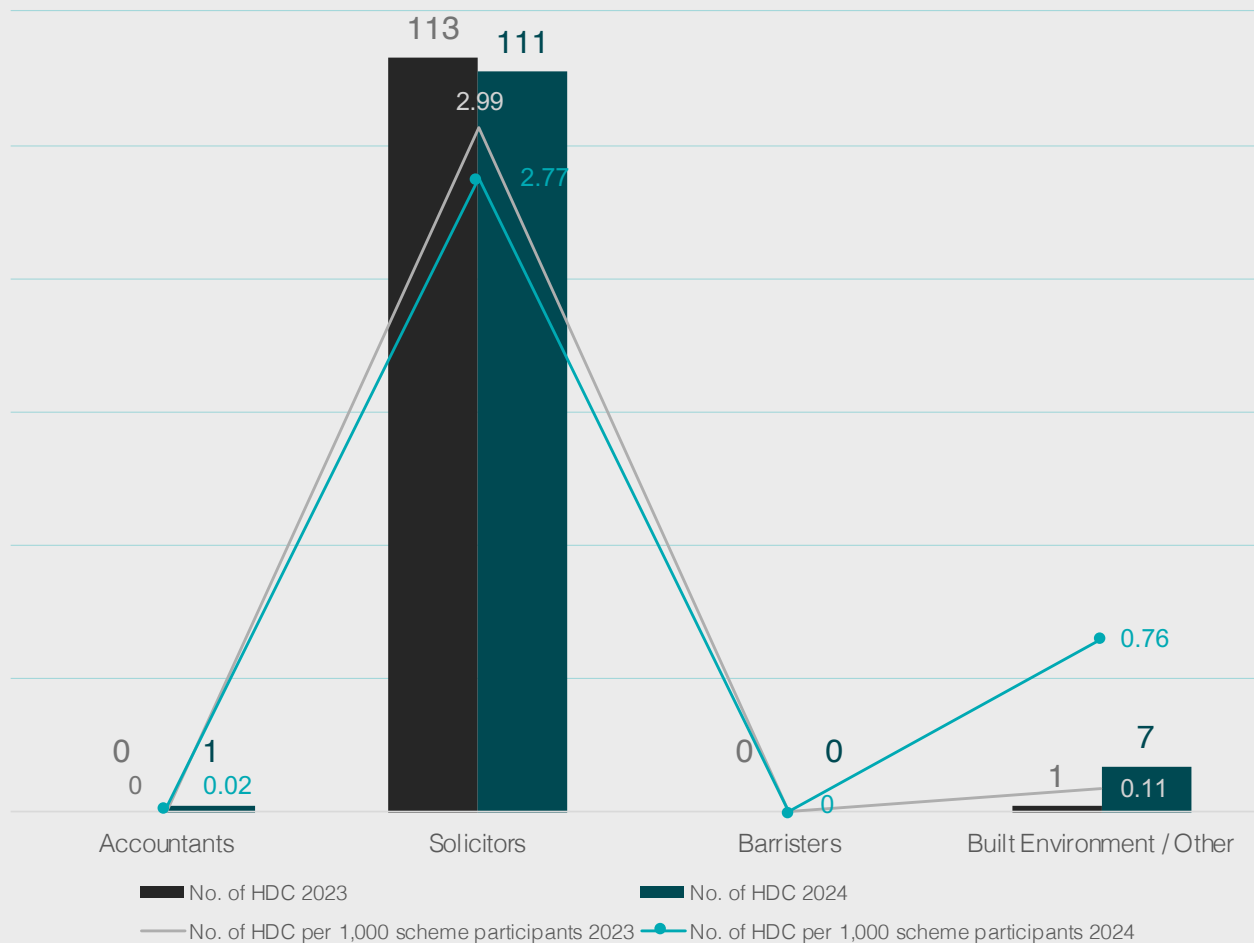


Higher discretionary caps

A scheme may confer a discretionary authority on an association, on application by a scheme participant, to specify a higher maximum amount of liability than would otherwise apply under the scheme, either in all cases or in any specified case or class of case.

Figure 9:

Higher discretionary caps trend comparison 2023 to 2024



Improving occupational standards and consumer protection

The Councils have the statutory function of encouraging and assisting the improvement of occupational standards of members of occupational associations. They can also facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience across the professions within and beyond the national system.

Information for applicants and prospective associations

The Authority met with five associations interested in applying for their first professional standards scheme, to provide an overview of schemes and the application process. These meetings assist prospective associations to assess whether a professional standards scheme is appropriate for them, and assist them to determine whether they are ready to apply for and operate a professional standards scheme. They also assist first time applicants to complete their initial scheme application.

The Authority met with an additional 10 associations with existing schemes approaching expiry dates. These meetings assisted the associations to prepare an application for a replacement scheme, with a focus on understanding the modular approach of the SAF, which is intended to obtain key information while minimising duplication and streamlining the process.

In addition to these meetings, Authority engagement and assistance included requisitions, feedback and guidance on draft scheme application documents. Additional guidance is available to associations through the SAF and regulatory guidance materials.

Professional standards forums

Professional standards forums advance the Councils' strategic objectives through facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing with stakeholders, particularly occupational associations.

The Councils hosted two foresight forums in July 2024, one in-person and one online. These forums engaged association leaders and experts on the key challenges and opportunities over the horizon to 2030 for professions and professional standards regulators.

The forums were facilitated by Mr Paul Higgins of Emergent Futures, using a structured and systematic format allowing stakeholders to explore ideas about the future to anticipate and better prepare for change. Key focus areas included trust in professions, new organisational structures, artificial intelligence and regulatory strategies.

The in-person event in Sydney brought the Councils together with more than 40 stakeholders and featured presentations from three expert speakers:

- Professor Alex Robson, Commissioner and Deputy Chair, Productivity Commission
- Kerri-Anne Millard, Executive Director, Policy and Outreach, Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner
- Dr Simon Longstaff AO, Executive Director, The Ethics Centre.

The online event enabled participation of associations across the national system.

"[I] find this a valuable time to catch up with other scheme leaders and PSC team members."

"It was good to discuss the rapid change that will/may happen in the next decade within the professions."

"A very enjoyable and worthwhile forum."



Picture: Mr Paul Higgins (Facilitator, Emergent Futures), Professor Alex Robson (Commissioner and Deputy Chair, Productivity Commission), Ms Kerri-Anne Millard (Executive Director Policy and Outreach, Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner) and Mr John Vines OAM (PSC Chair)



Picture: Mr John Vines OAM (PSC Chair) delivers an opening address at the Foresight Forum

Reporting on the benefits of schemes – regulatory capacity and risk management

In 2024, the Councils developed a scope for qualitative research to assess the effects of schemes in five key areas: limitation of liability, professionalism and professional standards frameworks, risk management, compliance through annual reporting, and complaints data and management.

The Councils engaged an external research partner, Griffith University, to undertake primary data collection and thematic analysis and to prepare a report outlining the benefits of schemes in these five areas. This was based on the experiences of five occupational associations with schemes and the perspectives of industry stakeholders and experts. At the time of writing, the draft report is under review and expected to be published soon. Preliminary analysis of the findings provides the following insights:

- overall, those interviewed for the report consider schemes to provide an additional layer of support for existing professional standards frameworks, providing practical and reputational benefits to associations
- there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that schemes incentivise claimants to settle insurance claims and reduce the risk of runaway claims
- root cause analysis and improved training and education were considered primary mechanisms to identify and manage risks for associations, with the flow-on effect of improving consumer trust in professions
- annual reporting obligations under schemes maintain accountability and transparency.

The report will be finalised soon and published in the next reporting period.

Australian Research Council Linkage Project

In previous reporting years, the Councils reported on the progress of a three-year Linkage Project which investigated rebuilding trust and confidence in the building and construction sector in Australia.

During the reporting period, the Councils continued to contribute to finalisation and publication of research outputs as a lead partner organisation in the project.

Research outputs: industry report

The Final Industry Report on *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism* was published in August 2024. This report was the culmination of the project, involving universities and government bodies from across Australia. The report presented the key findings and recommendations from the research project, including:

- key features that make ethics and quality outcomes less likely or more likely
- factors that facilitate high standards and good quality outcomes, including mutually reinforcing ‘integrity enablers’ which help professionals deliver quality outcomes, helping sustain professionalism and trustworthiness
- pathways for action to strengthen ethical and professional standards in the construction sector, increase accountability and build public trust
- practical recommendations for elevating professional standards and the role that all stakeholders – including individual practitioners, regulators and professional bodies – can play in this effort.

While the report was focused on professionals in the building and construction sector, the outcomes and insights are relevant to the improvement and promotion of high standards and effective regulation across a broad range of professions.

Research outputs: monograph

In the last reporting period, the Councils reported on our contribution to a monograph being compiled by Griffith University as the main academic output of the project. The publication will provide a collection of chapters to bring together findings and conclusions from the research.

During the reporting period, the Councils continued to work with Griffith University to finalise our contribution to the monograph, focused on professionalisation and the role of meta-regulation. It identifies the advantages of meta-regulatory arrangements, such as professional standards schemes, in growing regulatory capacity of the construction industry.

The monograph is expected to be published in the second half of 2025. The Councils will report further on this publication in the next reporting period.

Working with other regulators and standards setters

The Councils continued to participate in the Tax Practitioner Governance and Standards Forum as an ex-officio member, represented by the acting Chief Executive Officer of the Authority (or delegate). One Forum was attended during the reporting year. The Councils continued to monitor discussions on guidance to support tax practitioners with regulatory reforms to enhance code of conduct obligations.

We also attended the Commonwealth Treasury Roundtable, representing the Councils as an ex-officio member of the Tax Practitioner Governance and Standards Forum. The Authority monitored discussions on proposed reforms to the eligibility requirements (including qualifications, experience and skills) for registration with the Tax Practitioners Board and consultation material relevant to this.

Authority officers continued to engage with the NSW Strata and Property Services Commissioner and NSW Fair Trading on issues in the strata management sector, particularly in relation to ethical obligations and regulatory reforms. This remains ongoing. The Councils will continue to engage with stakeholders and monitor outcomes as matters progress. The Councils also continued to engage with the relevant association regarding risk management responses to these issues.

Section 3

Structure and governance

Three intergovernmental agreements are in place to facilitate operation of the national system of professional standards regulation.

Professional Standards Agreement 2011

This is an agreement between the Ministers in all states, territories and the Commonwealth. It facilitates cooperation in the administration of professional standards schemes across state and territory boundaries, and the promotion of high professional standards and consumer protection throughout Australia.

The agreement also provides for cooperation in the selection and appointment of members to, and administrative support of, the Councils.

The agreement is operationalised by the following two agreements.

Professional Standards Councils and Departmental Procurement of Services Agreement 2016

This is an agreement between state and territory departments and the Councils to ensure that the Councils have the services they require to carry out their functions.

Professional Standards Inter-Departmental Service Agreement

This is an agreement between state and territory departments for services to the Councils to be provided by the NSW Department of Customer Service (DCS), which hosts the Authority.

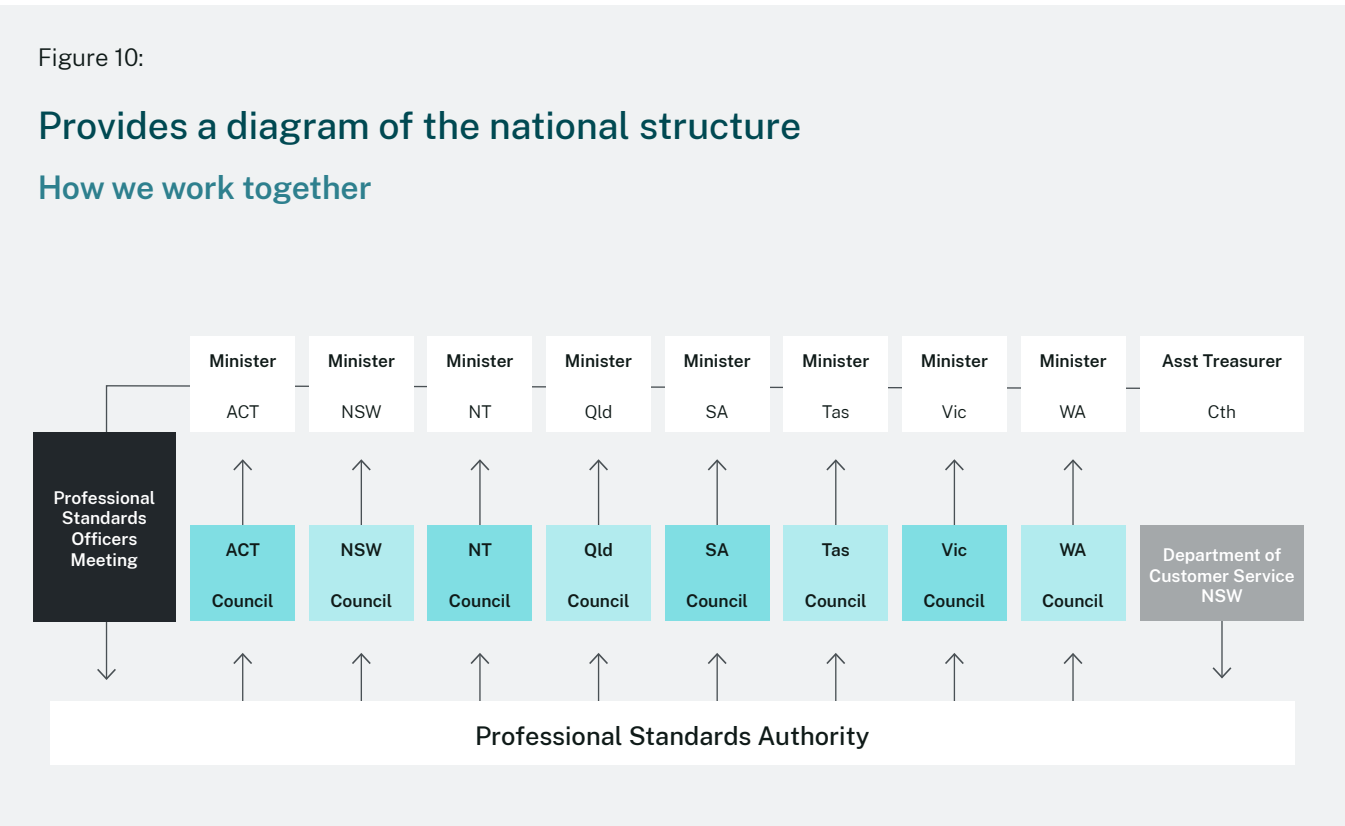
Departmental arrangements

The intergovernmental agreements are administered by professional standards officers in the relevant department for each jurisdiction. To facilitate coordination, the Authority convenes a Professional Standards Officers Meeting which provides for liaison and cooperation across jurisdictions.

The Professional Standards Officers Meeting discusses issues that require consideration at a national level and oversees the implementation of the intergovernmental agreements.

During the reporting period the Authority worked with policy officers and other jurisdictional staff on:

- assisting responsible Ministers with notification, gazettal, extension and prescription of professional standards schemes
- supporting jurisdictional Ministers in the nomination and appointment of members to the Councils
- proposed changes to fee payments under jurisdictional regulations, consistent with changes in the new regulation made under the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW)
- advice for Ministers on proposed amendments to the professional standards legislation of each state and territory
- jurisdictional auditing and attestation processes
- the annual combined Professional Standards Councils’ reporting processes.



Councils' remuneration

In accordance with the *Professional Standards Agreement 2011*, NSW sets the rates of the remuneration payable to the members of the Councils in accordance with the applicable guidelines for the remuneration of government boards.

Table 4 shows total remuneration for each member for 2024–25.

Table 4:

Remuneration and meeting attendance of council members

Name	Role	Jurisdiction	Total remuneration [^]	Meetings eligible to attend	Meetings attended
John Vines OAM	Chair	Vic	\$58,924	8	8
Lisa King	Member	NSW	\$23,570	8	8
Professor Jenni Millbank	Member	NSW	\$6,129	2	2
Ross Springolo	Member	NT	\$23,570	8	7
Catherine Wood AM	Member	ACT	\$23,570	8	8
Dr Pamela Montgomery	Member	Vic	\$23,570	8	7
Timothy Mellor	Member	SA	\$23,570	8	7
Elizabeth Shearer	Member	Qld	\$23,570	8	8
Peter Martin	Member	Cth	\$23,570	8	7
Caroline Lamb	Member	NSW	\$6,490	2	1
Tiina-lissa Sexton	Member	Tas	\$23,570	8	7
Rachel Webber	Member	WA	\$23,570	8	8

[^] Includes 11% Super Guarantee Contribution.

The term of one New South Wales nominee, Ms Lamb, ended on 30 September 2024. Professor Millbank was appointed for a three-year term commencing 18 March 2025.

Councils' finance, audit and risk management

Under professional standards legislation, the Councils may establish committees to assist in the exercise of their functions.

Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committees

Each Council has established a committee of the same members to form the combined Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committees (FARMCs) to oversee financial management, risk management, budget management, the Councils' annual report content, and associations' annual risk management and compliance reporting.

Members and meetings of the FARMCs

- Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton (Tas) Chair
- Mr Ross Springolo (NT) Deputy Chair (commenced in role as a Deputy Chair on 8 July 2024)
- Ms Catherine Wood AM (ACT)
- Mr Peter Martin (Cth)
- Ms Elizabeth Shearer (QLD) (commenced in role as a FARMCs member on 28 February 2025).

There were eight FARMCs meetings held during the 2024–25 reporting year. Three were scheduled committee meetings and five were circulating resolutions or out-of-session meetings.

Work of the FARMCs

The work of the FARMCs during the reporting period, supported by officers of the Authority, included the following:

- reviewed and endorsed the content of the Councils' 2023–24 Annual Report
- endorsed the Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2024
- endorsed the jurisdictional audit reports received for FY2023–24
- advised the Councils on the preparation and approval of the FY2025–26 budget
- advised the Councils on association annual reporting matters
- monitored management of risk and provided related advice to the Councils
- reviewed and monitored the Councils' statutory compliance activities
- monitored progress in implementing and finalising self-assessment activities aligned with best practice improvements, as outlined in the Queensland Audit Office's *Regulating Animal Welfare Services* (Report 6: 2021–22).

Queensland Auditor-General recommendations on better practices

The Queensland Auditor-General encouraged public sector regulators to self-assess their regulatory approaches against better practices published in *Regulating animal welfare services* (Report 6: 2021–22). The Councils performed a self-assessment against these practices.

This reporting period, the Councils made their final report to the Auditor-General on the status of actions following the self-assessment, which found a moderate-to-high level of maturity in regulatory practices. Opportunities for improvement in compliance practices identified through the assessment were incorporated into the Councils' risk management framework. The final report to the Queensland Audit Office was submitted as "fully implemented".

Risk management

The Councils are committed to proactive risk management strategies and to fostering a positive risk culture that recognises both threats and opportunities. This commitment is a core element of *Strategy 2025*, which outlines the Councils' goal of being recognised as a trusted and effective regulator with a transparent and robust approach to risk and performance.

Risk management principles are embedded in the development and execution of the Councils' strategy, statutory decision-making processes, and the delivery of operations overseen by the Authority. The Councils' approach is formalised through a Risk Management Plan, which supports systematic monitoring and mitigation of risks across five key domains: statutory, strategic, financial, operational, and reputational. We anticipate that a new plan will be developed following the development of the next Councils' strategic plan, which will replace *Strategy 2025*.

These risks are identified and managed in line with the International Standard ISO 31000:2018 – *Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines*. This Standard provides principles and guidelines for effective risk management. The FARMCs consider and provide advice to the Councils on the adoption, and changes to, the Risk Management Plan, and oversee and report on risk management performance.

Financial management

The FARMCs meet at least four times a year and review and consider the income and expenses for the Councils, providing assurance the Councils are meeting obligations.

Internal and external audit and testing

The Professional Standards Councils of Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, and Victoria (only) are required to produce externally audited annual financial statements. The financial statements of the South Australian Council are subject to optional tabling in Parliament.

The tabling of financial statements for these jurisdictions occurs after the release of the Councils' combined annual report. Upon tabling, these statements are published as financial addendums on the Professional Standards Councils' website. Annually, jurisdictional staff responsible for performing the audit functions engage with the respective jurisdictions and Councils concerning scheduled audits, audit fees, and matters pertaining to governance and tabling procedures.

Additional auditing and testing is undertaken by DCS. This can be through compulsory requirements (such as website intrusion testing and quarterly attestations, cyber security testing and other requirements – see below) and other matters.

Professional Standards Authority

The Authority is a business unit within the Fair Trading and Regulatory Services Division of DCS. It was established to support the Councils in delivering the services they need to fulfil their statutory obligations and functions.

The Authority provides a range of operational and regulatory services, including:

- supporting the Councils in their statutory decision-making functions, including the assessment and approval of schemes
- supporting and guiding associations in the development of applications for schemes
- supervising and monitoring scheme administration and compliance, including reporting and analysis, and developing regulatory guidance to assist associations to operate schemes
- encouraging and assisting occupational associations to develop and strengthen regulatory capacity, enhance professional standards and risk management, and comply with legislative requirements to better protect consumers
- providing information to stakeholders about professional standards schemes
- promoting research and education in professional standards and consumer protection
- providing general secretariat services to the Councils.

These functions are provided in accordance with the intergovernmental agreements that underpin the national professional standards framework.

Authority's organisational structure

The budget approved by the Councils sets the capacity for staffing and operational costs within the Authority.

Figure 11:

Authority organisational structure as at 30 June 2025

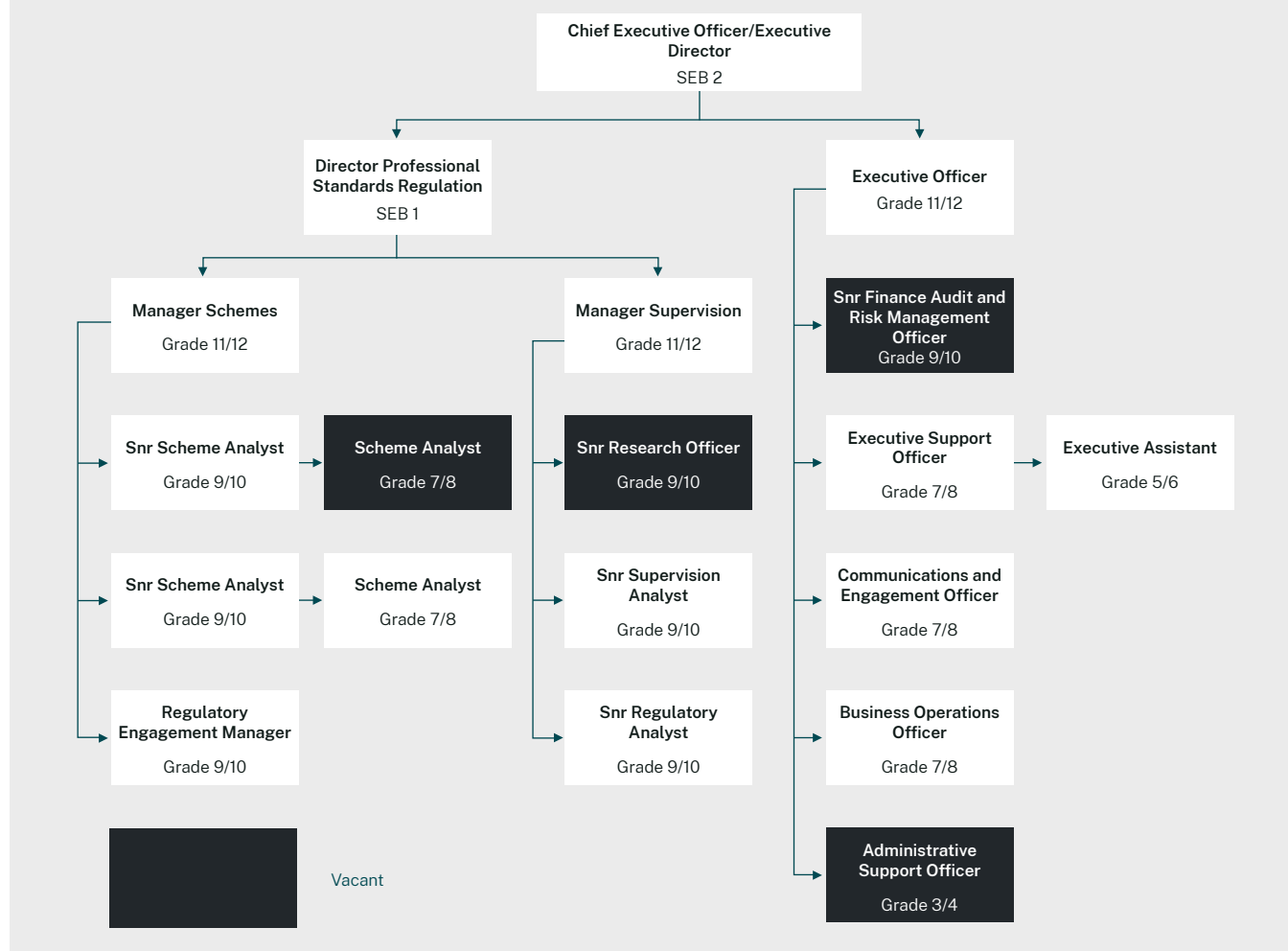


Table 5:

Authority staff profile as at 30 June 2025

Position/grade	No. of positions
Senior Executive Band 2	1 (male)
Senior Executive Band 1	1 (female)
Clerk Grade 11/12	3
Clerk Grade 9/10	5
Clerk Grade 7/8	4
Clerk Grade 5/6	1
Total	15

Authority’s senior executive

At 30 June 2025, the Authority had two positions classified as Senior Executive in the NSW Public Service. The two positions are included in DCS workforce statistics. The Department’s average remuneration level of Senior Executives in each band at the end of the financial year is detailed in Table 6.

Table 6:

Senior Executive remuneration in DCS

	Band 1	Band 2
2024-25 range	\$201,350–\$287,200	\$287,201–\$361,300
2024-25	\$218,384	\$288,063
2023–24 range	\$201,350–\$287,200	\$287,201–\$361,300
2023–24	\$244,275	\$324,250



Acting Chief Executive Officer

Darren Holder
LLB, BA (Hons), GDLP

Darren Holder has led the Professional Standards Authority on behalf of the Professional Standards Councils since August 2024. As acting CEO, Darren assists the Councils to administer professional standards legislation and is responsible for the delivery of the operational and regulatory services of the Authority.

Darren is a qualified lawyer with 25 years of experience in regulation, compliance, law, public policy and government administration. He has worked in Commonwealth and NSW Government roles as well as in private legal practice. He has specialised in government regulation for over 10 years.

Authority's workforce management

Responsibility for the Authority's workforce management sits within the remit of DCS.

Due to the small size of the Authority's workforce and privacy requirements, data related to the Authority's workforce management are not included in this report. This data is incorporated in the DCS Annual Report each year. Key areas of focus for the reporting period have been resourcing, flexible working arrangements and opportunities for personal and career development. Our strategies are designed to enable the Authority to attract and retain high quality employees.

Turnover

In last year's report, we noted the ongoing challenge of vacancy rates, which placed pressure on our resources and reduced our operational capacity. These issues continued this year, with several staff acting in higher roles for extended periods. With a strong focus on staff wellbeing, we continued to actively monitor our priorities and workload. Where necessary, we adjusted timelines for some tasks and allocated staff to priority statutory functions as we focussed on delivering a higher than usual volume of core regulatory tasks. No statutory functions were affected, but some planned strategic initiatives were impacted.

Professional development

We have continued our efforts to build a motivated, skilled, professional, and inclusive workforce. The Authority is committed to investing in the growth of our staff. We support the development of their knowledge and skills to help them excel in their current roles and achieve their career goals.

Professional development activities over the reporting period have focused on staff building on their broad regulatory knowledge and skills, enhancing professional standards expertise and supporting public sector professionalism.

Staff participated in a range of learning and development opportunities, including:

- Crown Solicitors Office - Introduction to the GIPA Act training
- Crown Solicitors Office (and other providers) - various continuing legal professional development seminars
- IPAA - Finance for Non-Finance Professionals
- DCS mandatory training modules
- SAI Global - Risk, Complaints and Compliance standards workshop
- DCS Elevate Leaders Program

Staff also attended conferences, forums and other events to maintain and improve their knowledge of regulatory practice, industry sector issues, association governance and other matters. These included the Australian Securities and Investments Commission Annual Forum and Associations Forum National Conference.

Performance and remuneration

All staff undertake regular performance reviews and are remunerated in accordance with the conditions of NSW public sector employees.

Work health and safety

The Authority's staff are governed by Work Health and Safety practices of DCS. We continued to provide access to an employee assistance program through our provider PeopleSense.

A free annual flu vaccination program in the lead-up to winter was made available to all staff. All permanent, temporary and casual staff employed by DCS are eligible for this program.

As part of its commitment to staff wellbeing, the Authority promoted and encouraged the use of DCS wellbeing resources. The Department's online Wellbeing Hub continues to be available to all staff to access information and resources for self-care, domestic violence support, employee assistance programs, belonging and psychological support, as well as a comprehensive help and support directory.

Flexible working arrangements

In August 2024, the NSW Premier's Department issued *Circular C2024-03 NSW Government Sector workplace presence*, setting the starting position that government employees work principally from an approved workplace.

The DCS Flexible Working Policy was developed in consultation with staff and came into effect in February 2025. The policy applies to Authority staff and provides for various flexible working options, including hybrid working, part-time work, job share, purchased leave and compressed working hours.

The policy recognises that presence in the physical workplace plays an essential role for employees and managers while supporting flexible working. It requires regular office attendance while supporting hybrid work arrangements. Staff continue to work effectively both from home and approved workplaces, recognising individual circumstances and business needs as reflected in the policy.

Values, inclusion and diversity

As employees of the NSW public sector, all staff are committed to upholding its core values of integrity, trust, service and accountability. In doing so, all staff are guided by the Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW Government Sector Employees.

The Authority has continued to adopt the DCS Care and Belonging Strategy, a multi-faceted approach to diversity and inclusion.

Further information on workforce diversity and inclusion, including initiatives and statistics, is provided in the DCS Annual Report.

Workers' compensation

There have been no workers compensation claims within the Authority's workforce during the reporting period.

Fraud and corruption

Fraud and corrupt conduct have the potential to cause significant financial and non-financial harm. The impacts include reputational damage, impairment of our ability to deliver services or outcomes to the public and the undermining of our internal corporate culture.

All fraud and corruption activities are lead by DCS.

The control plan currently in place aims to build an environment that actively discourages fraudulent and corrupt activities within the Department by:

- creating a Department that acts with honesty and integrity
- driving a workplace culture underpinned by its ethics
- driving systems, processes and a culture that prevent fraud and corruption occurring
- detecting, investigating and taking appropriate action when fraud and corruption incidents are found to have occurred, using a transparent framework for reporting and investigating fraud and corruption should it occur
- a mindset of continuous improvement in which we continually learn how to be better at fraud and corruption control and implement that learning in our everyday work.

Business continuity

All business continuity activities are led by DCS Business continuity planning. This aims to provide expertise, incident and crisis management capabilities across DCS by empowering staff to take appropriate action to protect their divisions. This is done by developing policy, providing guidance, delivering training and creating tools and other resources.

DCS also facilitates continuous improvement through the sharing of the knowledge and experience of business continuity and incident management practitioners.

Cybersecurity

DCS manages cybersecurity for all the divisions within its remit, with further information available in the Department's Annual Report.

Regular cybersecurity training modules are provided by DCS to ensure Authority staff are equipped to identify and respond to cyber threats. The Councils' website is subject to annual backup and intrusion and penetration testing. Results for testing conducted during the reporting period were again favourable, with no moderate or high-risk vulnerabilities identified.

Section 4

Financial performance

Financial statements

The Councils' financial results for 2024-25 are presented here. Financial statements have been audited as required in four jurisdictions and our financial management is subject to an agreed upon procedures engagement report by the Audit Office of New South Wales.

Financial performance of the Professional Standards Councils

The activities and operations of the Councils and the Authority are funded from fees paid under professional standards legislation. The Councils use their best endeavours to keep operational and strategic budgets to the amount reasonably necessary to cover the cost of providing services across the national system. The Councils do not draw on any of the eight jurisdictional Departmental budgets.

The budget for carrying out regulatory and support services is prepared annually by the Authority, reviewed and endorsed by the FARMCs and approved by the Councils. The Authority provides the administrative support functions to manage the budgets and accounts, including processing payments, preparing invoices, producing monthly accounts and assisting with financial accounting systems. We are in the process of transitioning to the provision of financial services by the NSW Department of Customer Service on an ongoing basis.



Table 7:

Summary of Income and Expenses¹ for year ended 30 June 2025²

Accrued revenue summary:	Total	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Plus: - Bfwd Contract liabilities annual fees from FY23/24	758,349	596,653	0	0	161,696	0	0	0	0
Plus -Total cash FY24/25 annual/ application fees received	4,603,518	2,988,918	458,150	108,200	902,050	146,200			
Plus -Total 1 April to 30 June 2025 annual fees accrued	112,217	68,446	11,900	100	10,921	20,850			
Plus -Total interest on overdue annual fees payable	17,673	17,563	0	37	73	0			
Less- Reversal of accrual for annual fees 30 June 2024	(85,248)	(63,439)	(8,100)	(2,600)	(7,759)	(3,350)	0	0	0
Less - Annual fees contract liabilities (cfwd) to FY25/26	(758,708)	(596,049)			(162,659)				
Total Income (association driven) to be recognised FY24/25	4,647,801	3,012,092	461,950	105,737	904,322	163,700			
Income	Combined	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Scheme annual fees ³	4,610,129	2,984,529	461,950	105,700	899,249	158,700			
Scheme application fees ⁴	20,000	10,000			5,000	5,000	-	-	-
Interest on overdue annual fee (from associations) ⁵	17,673	17,563	0	37	73	0	-	-	-
Sub total association fees	4,647,801	3,012,092	461,950	105,737	904,322	163,700	0	0	0
NSW Council's lease expense ⁶						-	-	-	-
Co-occupancy income ⁷	93,982	93,982					-	-	-
Interest on funds ⁸	251,543	205,337	40,980	0	5,226	-	-	-	-
Bank fees and charges	0					-	-	-	-
Total income	4,993,326	3,311,411	502,930	105,737	909,548	163,700	0	0	0
Individual Councils % of total income ⁹	100.00%	66.32%	10.07%	2.12%	18.22%	3.28%	0%	0%	0%
Expenses									
Employment costs (inc. external non on-going) ¹⁰	2,874,479	1,906,259	289,520	60,871	523,592	94,237	0	0	0
Other operating ¹¹	1,731,753	1,148,441	174,424	36,672	315,442	56,774	0	0	0
Total expenses	4,606,233	3,054,701	463,944	97,543	839,034	151,010	-	-	-
Expenses Attributable to the relevant Councils (GST exclusive):	4,606,233	3,054,701	463,944	97,543	839,034	151,010	0	0	0
Invoiced to 31 March 2025	3,647,821	2,403,217	373,695	79,740	699,702	91,467			
To be invoiced for quarter ending 30 June 2025	958,412	651,484	90,249	17,803	139,332	59,543	0	0	0

Note 1: This unaudited statement is derived from the information provided by the New South Wales Department of Customer Service (NSW DCS) and records kept by the Authority. NSW DCS provided financial reporting services to the Councils. All revenue and expenditure figures are prepared based on an accruals basis of accounting and are exclusive of Goods and Services Tax. The annual financial statements for South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria are required under their respective legislation and audited financial statements are provided separately to the relevant jurisdictional departments, for tabling in their respective parliaments.

Note 2: Amounts shown as revenue, expenses and accrued charges are calculated to the nearest cent, however are shown subject to rounding to the nearest dollar in a manner to preserve the value of totals.

Note 3: Scheme annual fee revenue is recognised over the scheme year; some scheme annual periods are not aligned to a fiscal year resulting in a deferred (contract liability) component. This deferred component is recognised during the subsequent fiscal year.

Note 4: Scheme application fees are recognised on a cash received basis.

Note 5: Interest from associations due to overdue annual fees is recognised on an accrual basis. The value is shown net of any remissions, waivers or determinations by Council that the fee is not payable, in part or whole.

Note 6: AASB 16 accounting entries pertaining to the New South Wales Professional Standards Council as premises lessee, up to 30 April 2025.

Note 7: Income received, net of GST from the (NSW) Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission for co-occupancy of level 2, 111 Elizabeth Street, Sydney.

Note 8: Interest from financial institutions is recognised on cash basis, and is shown gross of bank charges and fees.

Note 9: Percentage of income of each Council, as a proportion of total income, shown to two decimal places, noting that expenses are calculated using unlimited decimal places.

Note 10: Employment expenses are for the Authority and include non ongoing staff. Expenses are determined on an accruals basis and contains all relevant on-costs and also includes on costs and workers compensation charges for Councils members.

Note 11: Being general operating expenses calculated on an accrual basis, including occupancy, actuarial, consultancy and/or legal advice, general maintenance and information technology and communications support costs. Also, direct depreciation costs (for tangible and intangible assets, that were obtained by NSW DCS to solely support Authority's business activities). Councils do not own any tangible/intangible assets.

Table 8:

Detailed expenditure 2024–25¹²

Detailed expenses ¹³	Combined	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Employment expenses									
Employees	2,688,564	1,782,967	270,795	56,934	489,727	88,142	0	0	0
Contractors external	185,915	123,293	18,726	3,937	33,865	6,095	0	0	0
Total employment expenses	2,874,479	1,906,259	289,520	60,871	523,592	94,237	0	0	0
Other operating expenses									
Occupancy ¹⁴	739,573	490,460	74,491	15,661	134,715	24,246	0	0	0
Computer Related Expenses	4,015	2,663	404	85	731	132	0	0	0
Fees and Charges ¹⁵	180,779	119,886	18,208	3,828	32,929	5,927	0	0	0
Board Members Fees (exc Sup, PRT) ¹⁶	239,434	158,785	24,116	5,070	43,613	7,850	0	0	0
Insurance	16,160	10,717	1,628	342	2,944	530	0	0	0
Audit Fees ¹⁷	82,094	54,442	8,269	1,738	14,954	2,691	0	0	0
Consulting ¹⁸	104,382	69,223	10,513	2,210	19,013	3,422	0	0	0
Maintenance	(459)	(304)	(46)	(10)	(84)	(15)	0	0	0
Postage & Telephones	1,046	693	105	22	190	34	0	0	0
Printing & Stationery	2,683	1,779	270	57	489	88	0	0	0
Training & Staff Development	18,867	12,512	1,900	400	3,437	619	0	0	0
Travel & Motor Vehicles ¹⁹	71,355	47,320	7,187	1,511	12,997	2,339	0	0	0
Misc Operating Expenses ²⁰	74,626	49,489	7,516	1,580	13,593	2,447	0	0	0
Other Operating Expenses	4,422	2,933	445	94	805	145	0	0	0
GovConnect Costs ²¹	20,120	13,343	2,027	426	3,665	660	0	0	0
Depreciation ²²	10,989	7,287	1,107	233	2,002	360	0	0	0
Passthrough Costs ²³	161,668	107,213	16,283	3,424	29,448	5,300	0	0	0
Total other operating expenses	1,731,753	1,148,441	174,424	36,672	315,442	56,774	0	0	0
Total expenses	4,606,233	3,054,701	463,944	97,543	839,034	151,010	0	0	0
% expenditure recharged / rechargeable	100.00%	66.32%	10.07%	2.12%	18.22%	3.28%	0%	0%	0%

Note 12: Detailed Expenditure 2024-25.

Note 13: Individual costs are subject to rounding to the nearest dollar.

Note 14: Includes payments for occupancy of premises (Level 2, 111 Elizabeth Street Sydney), security, lease make good provision discount unwind.

Note 15: Includes actuarial advice, annual report design services.

Note 16: Remuneration paid to Council Members were at rates determined by the NSW Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, in accordance with Clause 4, Schedule 2 of the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW). These allowances are the same for all members with the exception of the Chair.

Note 17: Includes costs associated with audit/reviews of all relevant jurisdictions, adjustments to the cost of the publication of the combined FY24/25 Annual Report.

Note 18: Includes advice on scheme renewals and strategic initiatives.

Note 19: Includes small portion of expenditure relating to strategic initiatives.

Note 20: Includes engagement forum, website hosting, publication and advertising expenses.

Note 21: Includes software and hardware, information systems expenses.

Note 22: Includes the annual depreciation/amortisation charges determined by NSW Department of Customer Service to recoup prior years capital expenditure.

Note 23: Includes CRM, telephone, network, service desk expenses.

State and territory Professional Standards Councils

Legislated reporting

The Councils are state and territory statutory bodies established by professional standards legislation, operating cooperatively to facilitate a national system of professional standards regulation. This section provides additional information to meet the annual reporting requirements of each jurisdiction.



Australian Capital Territory

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of the Australian Capital Territory were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2024–25.

Fraud

There were no instances of fraud during the reporting period.

Risk management

The risk management and audit practices of the Council are described on pages 49–50.

Public interest disclosure

There were no public interest disclosures for the 2024–25 reporting period.

Freedom of information

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 2016* (ACT) the Council must report on freedom of information requests received and handled during the reporting year. Section 96 of the Act requires the Council to report on the particulars of the operations of the agency, including the numbers and the types of access applications received by the agency. The statements are correct as at 30 June 2025.

Organisation and function

Please refer to page 51 for the Authority's organisational structure and function.

Category of documents

The Council holds several categories of documents that are available on the Professional Standards Councils' website, including:

- Councils' combined annual reports
- scheme application framework
- scheme and regulatory guidance
- policy papers
- scheme instruments.

Documents informing the making of decisions or recommendations

The Council makes its decisions to approve professional standards schemes by considering relevant legislative

criteria. To do this, the Council considers a number of documents, including an association's application and advice and recommendations provided by the Authority and independent actuarial and legal advice.

Information that must be provided with an application includes insurance data about the highest claims, types of claims and level of claims. Associations must also include their risk management strategies, education and other qualification requirements, and code of ethics and conduct.

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 51 for the organisational structure of the Authority which provides services and support to the Professional Standards Council of the Australian Capital Territory.

Work health and safety (WHS)

There were no work-related injuries, illnesses or prosecutions during the reporting period under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. Authority staff are governed by work health and safety practices of the NSW Department of Customer Service (DCS).

Territory records

Sound record keeping practices underpin good governance. In accordance with the requirements of the *Territory Records Act 2002* (ACT), the Council's record keeping system ensures documents can be accurately captured, stored and retrieved.

Financial performance

The Authority is responsible for collecting revenue and operating within budget. Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of the Australian Capital Territory's revenue and expenses for 2024–25.

Reporting on procurement and contracting activities

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was \$0 GST exclusive (see detailed expenditure on Table 8, page 57).

Per the Inter-Departmental Service Agreement, all expenditure is processed by DCS and allocated to the eight national Professional Standards Councils.

Six contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with no contract above \$25,000 (GST exclusive).

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 18 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 57.

New South Wales

Constitution of the Council

One member of the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales was entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year, and one was entitled to attend two. One member (whose term concluded during the reporting period) was entitled to attend two meetings. All other members were entitled to attend eight meetings. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Legislative changes

There were no legislative changes affecting the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales. The *Professional Standards Regulation 2019* (NSW) was replaced by the *Professional Standards Regulation 2024* (NSW), which made changes to the fee payment regime.

Credit cards

The operation of staff provided credit cards complies with the directions of NSW Treasury (TPP 21-02).

Public interest disclosure

There were no public interest disclosures for the 2024–25 reporting period.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) (GIPA Act) requires all NSW Government agencies (including the Department's business units) to respond to requests for information, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosing the information.

The Council is declared to be part of the Department for the purposes of the GIPA Act. Applications made under the GIPA Act relating to the Council are centrally coordinated within the Department. The Department's Annual Report 2024–25 contains statistical information about access applications.

Consumer response

Before any professional standards scheme can be considered for approval by the Councils, a formal public notification process (described in section 8 of the NSW legislation and similar in all other jurisdictions) is undertaken, whereby any person can make a submission to the Councils with their views on the proposed scheme during the minimum 28-day period.

During the 2024–25 reporting year, the following schemes were publicly notified under section 8 of the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW):

- The New South Wales Bar Association Professional Standards Scheme
- The Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand Professional Standards Scheme
- The CPA Australia Professional Standards Scheme

A further two scheme public notification periods continued from the previous reporting year.

During the reporting period, there were also the following schemes publicly notified under the professional standards legislation of other jurisdictions:

- The Victorian Bar Professional Standards Scheme
- The Western Australian Bar Association Professional Standards Scheme

Work health and safety

There were no work-related injuries, illnesses or prosecutions during the reporting period under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW). Authority staff are governed by work health and safety policies of DCS.

Funds granted to non-government community organisations

During 2024–25 no grants were awarded.

Consultants

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was \$69,223 (GST exclusive).

In accordance with the Inter-Departmental Service Agreement, all expenditure is processed by DCS and allocated to the eight national Professional Standards Councils.

Six contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with no contracts above \$50,000 (GST exclusive).

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 18 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 57.

Overseas travel

There was no overseas travel undertaken.

Land disposal

The Professional Standards Council of New South Wales and the Authority do not own properties, nor did they acquire or dispose of properties during the reporting period.

Risk management

The risk management and internal audit practices of the Council are described on pages 49–50.

Privacy obligations

The Councils and the Authority have continued to comply with the requirements of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW). Multicultural policies and services programs.

The Authority's multicultural policies and service programs are guided by DCS's Diversity and Inclusion strategy, Aboriginal Workforce Strategy and Disability Inclusion Action Plan and the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* (NSW), which prioritises diversity in the workforce.

Financial performance

The Professional Standards Council of New South Wales is not required to compile financial statements. The Authority is responsible for collecting revenue and operating within budget.

Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales' revenue and expenses for 2024–25.

Social programs

No social programs were provided by the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales during the reporting period.

Economic or other factors

The factors that have affected the achievement of the operational objectives of the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales during the reporting period are set out on pages 19–22.

Workforce diversity

The Department's Diversity and Inclusion strategy is an over-arching strategy that will:

- underpin the growth of a customer focused culture
- support the development of key capabilities, such as inclusive leadership, innovation and employee engagement
- reach targets relating to Aboriginality, gender and people with disability, as laid out in the Premier's Priorities, the *Government Employment Sector Act 2013* (NSW) and by the Public Service Commission.

Disability inclusion action plans

There were no work-related injuries, illnesses or prosecutions during the reporting period under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW). Authority staff are governed by work health and safety policies of DCS.

Annual Report

The Councils' combined Annual Report is produced using internal resources and a contracted designer. It only prints the required number of Annual Reports and makes the report available on the Councils' website.

The cost to produce the combined Councils' 2024–25 Annual Report and the individual financial addendums was \$7,078. These costs will be recognised in the 2025–26 period. The New South Wales Council was responsible for funding 66.32% of these expenses.

Northern Territory

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Administered legislation

The Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory assists the Minister in administering the *Professional Standards Act 2004* (NT).

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2024–25.

Public interest disclosure

There were no public interest disclosures for the 2024–25 reporting period.

Staff development

The Council is committed to developing its employees. Our strategies are designed to build a highly skilled, professional and fair workforce with the ability to adapt to changing business technology and the environment.

Organisational structure

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 13–15.

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 51 for the organisational structure of the Authority, which provides services and support to the Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory.

Work health and safety

There were no work-related injuries, illnesses or prosecutions during the reporting period under the *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011* (NT). Authority staff are governed by Work Health and Safety practices of DCS.

Information Act 2002 (NT)

The Council received no requests for information under the *Information Act 2002* (NT) during the reporting period. The Authority may collect and handle personal information on the Council's behalf. Any inquiries about access to information or access or correction of personal information should be directed to the Authority.

Record keeping

Sound record keeping practices underpin good governance. In accordance with the requirements of the *Information Act 2002* (NT), the Council's record keeping system ensures documents can be accurately captured, stored and retrieved.

Financial performance

The Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory is not required to compile financial statements. The Authority is responsible for collecting revenue and operating within budget. During the reporting period, the Authority undertook these tasks.

Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory's revenue and expenses for 2024–25.

Public sector employment and management

The Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory did not have any compliance issues arising from the Public Sector Standards and Northern Territory Code of Ethics during the reporting period.

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during the reporting period.

Queensland

Letter of compliance

5 September 2025

The Honourable Deborah (Deb) Frecklington MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Justice
Minister for Integrity

1 William Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Attorney-General

I am pleased to submit for presentation to the Parliament the Annual Report 2024–2025 and financial statements for the Professional Standards Council of Queensland.

I certify that this Annual Report complies with:

- the prescribed requirements of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (QLD) and the *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019* (QLD), and
- the detailed requirements set out in the *Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies* to the extent possible.

A checklist outlining the annual reporting requirements is provided at pages 63–64 of this Annual Report.

Yours sincerely



John Vines OAM

Chair, Professional Standards Council of Queensland

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of Queensland were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Organisational structure

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 13–15.

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 51 for the organisational structure of the Authority which provides services and support to the Professional Standards Council of Queensland.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to the professional standards legislation during 2024–25.

Risk management

The risk management and internal audit practices of the Council are described on pages 49-50.

Right to information reporting

The *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) grants the public the right to access information that the government possesses or controls, unless it is contrary to the public interest to do so. Information about the Council's role and operations – as well as annual reports, policy and discussion papers, application forms and guidelines for professional standards schemes – are available online at psc.gov.au.

Consultation notices for new professional standards schemes are also published on the website and in major newspapers. Once a scheme becomes operational, the scheme document is also made publicly available on the website.

The Professional Standards Council of Queensland received no requests under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) during the reporting period.

Protection of personal information

Section 40 of the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) advises that a person has a right to access documents that contain their personal information. No access applications were received under the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) during the reporting period.

Public interest disclosure

The Professional Standards Council of Queensland did not receive any disclosures covered under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010* (Qld) during the reporting period.

Human rights

The Council did not receive any human rights complaints under the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld) during the reporting period.

Consultants

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was \$10,513 (GST exclusive).

In accordance with the Inter-Departmental Service Agreement, all expenditure is processed by DCS and allocated to the eight national Professional Standards Councils.

Six contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year.

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 18 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 57.

Overseas travel

There was no overseas travel undertaken.

Public sector employment and management

Members of the Professional Standards Council of Queensland are required to comply with the Code of Conduct of the Professional Standards Councils pursuant to the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (Qld).

The Council did not have any compliance issues arising from the Code of Conduct of the Professional Standards Councils during the reporting period.

Record keeping

Sound recordkeeping practices underpin good governance. In accordance with the requirements of the *Public Records Act 2023* (Qld), the Council's record keeping system ensures documents can be accurately captured, stored and retrieved.

Waste management

The Authority is governed by the Department's Government Resource Efficiency Policy. The Council and the Authority comply with this policy to limit the impact of their operations on the environment.

For example, promotional material, such as the Annual Report, is produced on FSC certified paper and is made carbon neutral. The Council only prints the required number of Annual Reports and makes the report available on the Councils' website.

Financial performance

The audited financial statements of the Professional Standards Council of Queensland are provided as a separate document. Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of Queensland's revenue and expenses for 2024-25.

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during the reporting period.

South Australia

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of South Australia were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2024–25.

Fraud

There were no instances of fraud during the reporting period.

Freedom of information reporting

The Council is required to publish a statement about the particulars, functions and powers of that agency, as well as certain categories of documents held by each agency and the arrangements for public participation in formulating policy and operations. The statement is correct as at 30 June 2025.

Organisation and functions

Please refer to page 51 for the Authority's organisational structure and function.

Administered legislation

The Professional Standards Council of South Australia assists the Minister in administering the *Professional Standards Act 2004* (SA).

Document categories

The Council holds several categories of documents, including those which are available on request and without charge. These can be found on the Professional Standards Councils' website.

Specifically, these include:

- Councils' combined annual reports
- scheme application framework
- scheme and regulatory guidance
- policy papers
- scheme instruments.

Arrangements can be made to inspect documents available under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (SA) by contacting the Authority between 9am and 5pm from Monday to Friday (except public holidays). The Council did not receive any applications to access documents (initial requests) during the reporting year. The Council did not receive any applications to internally review its decisions.

Record keeping

Sound record keeping practices underpin good governance. In accordance with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1997* (SA), the Council's record keeping system ensures documents can be accurately captured, stored and retrieved. This includes a computerised records management system and databases that record certain details of applications, submissions and correspondence.

Consultants

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was \$2,210 (GST exclusive). In accordance with the Inter-Departmental Service Agreement, all expenditure is processed by DCS and allocated to the eight national Professional Standards Councils.

Six contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with five contracts above \$10,000:

- Griffith University for engagement as an external research partner \$10,230 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,013 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,448 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,448 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,448 (GST exclusive).

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 18 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 57.

Public interest disclosure

The Council is required to disclose the number of occasions where it or a responsible officer of the Council has received public interest information under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018* (SA), which replaced the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993* (SA) on 1 July 2019. There were no such instances of disclosures during the reporting period.

Work health and safety

Authority staff are bound by the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) under DCS. There were no work-related injuries, illnesses or prosecutions during the reporting period.

Financial performance

A summary of audit outcomes from the audited financial statements of the Professional Standards Council of South Australia is supplied separately. This is provided in the ensuing Auditor-General's 'Update to the annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025', tabled at a later date. Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of South Australia's revenue and expenses for 2024–25.

Relationship to other agencies within the Minister's area of responsibility

The Attorney-General's Department provides legal, policy, administrative and other support to the Professional Standards Council of South Australia.

Tasmania

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of Tasmania were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. A summary of meeting attendance is shown on Table 4 on page 48.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2024–25.

Financial performance

The Professional Standards Council of Tasmania is not required to compile financial statements.

The Authority is responsible for collecting revenue and operating within budget. Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of Tasmania's revenue and expenses for 2024–25.

Victoria

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of Victoria were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2024–25.

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during the reporting period.

National Competition Policy

The Professional Standards Council of Victoria, to the extent applicable, complies with the requirements of the National Competition Policy.

Reporting of office based environmental impacts

The Minister for Finance issued financial reporting directives that require all entities defined as a 'department' under section 3 of the *Financial Management Act 1994* (Vic) to report on office based environmental impacts.

The Council does not maintain a separate secretariat or office facilities and thus does not have any operations within the scope of Financial Reporting Direction 24. Secretariat services to all jurisdictions' Professional Standards Councils are provided by DCS.

Promotional material, such as the Annual Report, is produced on FSC certified paper and is made carbon neutral. The Council only prints the required number of Annual Reports and makes the report available on the Councils' website.

Victorian Industry Participation Policy

The Professional Standards Council of Victoria is not required to report under the *Local Jobs First Act 2003* (Vic), as it did not enter into or complete any contracts worth more than \$3 million in metropolitan Melbourne or \$1 million in regional Victoria.

Freedom of information reporting

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic) gives members of the public the right to apply for access to information held by Ministers, state and territory government departments, local councils, public hospitals, most semi-government agencies and statutory authorities. The Professional Standards Council of Victoria received no requests under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic) during the reporting period.

Compliance with the *Building Act 1993* (Vic)

The Professional Standards Council of Victoria is not required to report under the *Building Act 1993* (Vic) as it does not own or lease property or any government building.

Protected disclosures

The *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* (Vic) encourages and facilitates disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies. It repealed the *Whistleblower Protection Act 2001* (Vic). In 2024–25, the Professional Standards Council of Victoria received no disclosures covered by either the *Whistleblower Protection Act 2001* (Vic) or the *Protected Disclosures Act 2012* (Vic).

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 51 for the organisational structure of the Authority which provides services and support to the Professional Standards Council of Victoria.

Work health and safety

Authority staff are bound by the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) under DCS. There were no work-related injuries, illnesses or prosecutions during the reporting period.

Financial performance

The audited financial statements of the Professional Standards Council of Victoria are attached as an addendum to this report. Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of Victoria's revenue and expenses for 2024–25.

Consultants

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was \$19,013 (GST exclusive).

In accordance with the Inter-Departmental Service Agreement, all expenditure is processed by DCS and allocated to the eight national Professional Standards Councils.

Six contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with five contracts above \$10,000:

- Griffith University for engagement as an external research partner \$10,230 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,013 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,448 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,448 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, \$23,448 (GST exclusive)

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 18 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 57.

Western Australia

Enabling legislation

The Professional Standards Council of Western Australia was established under section 8 of the *Professional Standards Act 1997* (WA). The Council is listed as a statutory authority in schedule 1 to the *Financial Management Act 2006* (WA) and is subject to the provisions of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (WA).

Responsible Minister

The responsible Minister is the Hon. Dr Tony Buti MLA Attorney General.

Statement of compliance

For year ended 30 June 2025

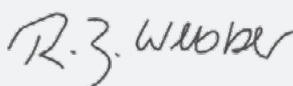
HON. DR TONY BUTI MLA
ATTORNEY GENERAL

In accordance with section 63 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*, we hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia for the financial year ended 30 June 2025.

The Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Financial Management Act 2006*.



John Vines OAM
Chair



Rachel Webber
Member

Organisational structure

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 13-15.

Mission

Please refer to page 3 for the Council's mission statement.

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 51 for the organisational structure of the Authority, which provides services and support to the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia.

Administered legislation

The Professional Standards Council of Western Australia assists the Minister in administering the *Professional Standards Act 1997* (WA). No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2024-25.

Shared responsibilities with other agencies

Please refer to the section on Intergovernmental Agreements and the Authority on pages 46-47.

Financial performance

The audited financial statements of the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia are attached as an addendum to this report. Please refer to page 56 for the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia's revenue and expenses for 2024-25.

Code of Ethics

The Professional Standards Council of Western Australia did not have any compliance issues arising from the Public Sector standards and Western Australia Code of Ethics during the reporting period.

For 2024-25, no breach claims were lodged in relation to either the Public Sector standards or the Western Australia Public Sector Code of Ethics.

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during the financial year.

Capital works

The Council has no capital works projects.

Pricing policies

Under the *Professional Standards Act 1997* (WA) and the *Professional Standards Regulations 1998* (WA), associations that apply for or operate a Professional Standards Scheme are required to pay an application fee and annual fees for each person to whom their professional standards scheme applies and who is a member of the association at any time during the annual fee period. These fees are prescribed in the legislation and are available on the Council's website.

Government building training policy

The Council did not issue any building or construction contracts during 2024–25.

Staff development

The Council is committed to supporting the development of employees. The Authority builds a highly skilled, professional and fair workforce with the ability to adapt to changing business technology and the environment.

Significant issues impacting the agency

The significant issues affecting the operational objectives of the Council during 2024–25 are set out on pages 19–22.

Workers' compensation

No workers' compensation claims were recorded during 2024–25.

Public Sector Commission's policy framework for substantive equality

While the Council is not required to report on the progress achieved in implementing the Public Sector Commission and Commissioner for Equal Opportunity's Policy Framework for substantive equality, the Council is aware of the purpose and aims of the Policy Framework.

Contracts with senior officers

At the date of reporting, no senior officers; or firms of which senior officers are members; or entities in which senior officers have substantive interests; have any interest in existing or proposed contracts with the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia, other than normal contracts of service.

Credit cards – unauthorised use

There were no instances of credit or purchasing cards being used for a personal purpose.

Constitution of the Council

The members of the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia were entitled to attend eight scheduled meetings for the year. Please refer to Table 4 on page 48 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Board and committee remuneration

Please refer to page 48 for a summary of the remuneration for each board and committee member. The Council is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive working environment.

Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling and direct mail

In accordance with section 175ZE of the *Electoral Act 1907* (WA), the Council incurred the following expenditure in advertising, market research, polling, direct mail and media advertising. Total Council expenditure on advertising, market research, polling and direct mail for 2024–25 was nil*, see Table 9 below. Expenditure was incurred in the following areas:

Table 9:

Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling and direct mail

Expenditure	Total	Organisation	Amount
Advertising agencies	NIL	NIL	NIL
Market research organisations	NIL	NIL	NIL
Polling organisations	NIL	NIL	NIL
Direct mail organisations	NIL	NIL	NIL
Media advertising organisations	NIL	NIL	NIL
Total			

*The expenditure shown is the Western Australia Professional Standards Council's share (23.28%) of the consolidated pool of annual expenses shared by all eight Councils, which is based on each individual Council's 2024–25 revenue compared to total 2024–25 revenue.

Disability access and inclusion plan outcomes

The Council is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive working environment for people with disability, including those who require adjustment. The Council's office has wheelchair and lift access and convenient parking close by. Council's publications are designed to be print-accessible for people with disabilities and can be supplied in alternative formats on request.

Record keeping

Sound record keeping practices underpin good governance. The Council has a system in place to ensure documents can be accurately captured, stored and retrieved, in accordance with the record keeping policy and procedures used by the Department of the Attorney-General and pursuant to the *State Records Act 2000* (WA).

Table 10:

Report of annual performance against targets¹

Measure	Total					Results against target
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Target
Number of fatalities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lost time injury and/or disease incidence rate	0	0	0	0	0	0 or 10% reduction
Lost time injury and/or severity rate	0	0	0	0	0	0 or 10% reduction
Percentage of injured workers returned to work:						100%
(i) within 13 weeks	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Greater than or equal to 80%
(ii) within 26 weeks	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health and injury management responsibilities					N / A	Greater than or equal to 80%

Notes

Note 1: Data includes the Council members and their national regulatory authority

Occupational safety, health and injury management

The Council is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy work environment and acknowledges its responsibilities under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (WA) and the *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023* (WA). During the 2024-25 reporting period, no workers' compensation claims were lodged, nor was any time lost from work as a result of illness or injury as shown in Table 10.

Section 6

Glossary and indexes

Jurisdictions

ACT	Australian Capital Territory	SA	South Australia
Cth	Commonwealth of Australia	Tas	Tasmania
NSW	New South Wales	Vic	Victoria
NT	Northern Territory	WA	Western Australia
Qld	Queensland		

Glossary

Association	The terms 'association', 'professional association' and 'occupational association' are used interchangeably within this document.
APSR	Annual Professional Standards Report
ARC	Australian Research Council, Commonwealth of Australia
Authority	Professional Standards Authority that provides support services to the Professional Standards Councils and is located within the NSW Department of Customer Service.
DCS / The Department	The NSW Department of Customer Service (formed on 1 July 2019) that the Authority is part of.
FARMCs	Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committees
GIPA	<i>Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009</i> (NSW)
HDC	Higher discretionary caps
Occupational association	The terms 'occupational association', 'professional association' and 'association' are used interchangeably within this document.
PSC	Professional Standards Councils ('The Councils')
Professional association	The terms 'professional association', 'occupational association' and 'association' are used interchangeably within this document.
SAF	Scheme Application Framework
Schemes	Professional standards schemes approved and gazetted under professional standards legislation.
The Councils	The combined Professional Standards Councils of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.

Associations with professional standards schemes

ACS	Australian Computer Society
AIBS	Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
APIV	Australian Property Institute Valuers
BAQ	Bar Association of Queensland
CA ANZ	Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand
CPA	CPA Australia
IPA	Institute of Public Accountants
LIV	Law Institute of Victoria
LSNSW	Law Society of New South Wales
LSSA	Law Society of South Australia
LSWA	Law Society of Western Australia
NSW Bar	New South Wales Bar Association
QLS	Queensland Law Society
SABA	South Australian Bar Association
SCA	Strata Community Association (NSW)
SAus	Surveyors Australia (formerly Association of Consulting Surveyors National)
Vic Bar	Victorian Bar
WABA	Western Australian Bar Association

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8	The Final Industry Report on <i>Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism</i>
8	July 2024 Professional Standards Forum
8	Workshop discussion at the July 2024 Professional Standards Forum
10	The Professional Standards Councils' Chair, Mr John Vines OAM
11	(L-R) Councils' members Distinguished Professor Jenni Millbank, Mr Timothy Mellor, Ms Catherine (Cate) Wood AM, Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton, Councils' Chair Mr John Vines OAM, Dr Pam Montgomery, Mr Peter Martin, Ms Rachel Webber and Ms Lisa King.
13	The Professional Standards Councils' Chair, Mr John Vines OAM
13	New South Wales Professional Standards Councils member, Ms Lisa King
13	New South Wales Professional Standards Councils member, Ms Caroline Lamb
13	Commonwealth Professional Standards Councils member, Mr Peter Martin
14	South Australia Professional Standards Councils member, Mr Timothy Mellor
14	New South Wales Professional Standards Councils member, Distinguished Professor Jenni Millbank
14	Victoria Professional Standards Councils member, Dr Pam Montgomery
14	Tasmania Professional Standards Councils member, Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton
14	Queensland Professional Standards Councils member, Ms Elizabeth Shearer
14	Northern Territory Professional Standards Councils member, Mr Ross Springolo
15	Western Australia Professional Standards Councils member, Ms Rachel Webber
15	Australian Capital Territory Professional Standards Councils member, Ms Catherine (Cate) Wood AM
15	The Professional Standards Councils June 2025 meeting
18	(L-R) Councils' members Ms Rachel Webber, Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton and Mr Timothy Mellor
19	The Professional Standards Councils' Strategy 2025
24	The Professional Standards Councils' Acting CEO, Mr Darren Holder
30	A public notification for the Australian Computer Society proposed professional standards scheme was featured on the NSW Government 'Have your say' website for public consultation
44	(L-R) Foresight Forum speakers Mr Paul Higgins (Facilitator, Emergent Futures), Professor Alex Robson (Commissioner and Deputy Chair, Productivity Commission), Ms Kerri-Anne Millard (Executive Director Policy and Outreach, Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner) and Mr John Vines OAM (PSC Chair)
44	The Professional Standards Councils' Chair Mr John Vines OAM at the Foresight Forum
52	The Professional Standards Councils' Acting CEO, Mr Darren Holder

Professional Standards Councils

Professional Standards Authority

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psc.gov.au

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Concept, design and typesetting

NSW Spatial Services
