PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COUNCILS

Annual Report

2025-2026

Protecting consumers by improving professional standards.

In this report

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. As required by professional standards legislation, we summarise our work and activities for the period of 12 months ending on 30 June 2026 (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 in the 'News and publications' section of our website: 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 live, walk and work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise and remain committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships, and continuing connection to their lands, waters and seas. We acknowledge their history here on these lands and their rich contribution to our society. We also acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees who are an integral part of our diverse workforce, and recognise the knowledge embedded forever in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodianship of Country and cultures.

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.

Letter of transmittal to Ministers

The Hon Tara Cheyne MLA

Attorney-General
Minister for City and Government Services
Minister for Transport
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

Deputy Premier
Attorney-General
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Minister for Industrial Relations
Minister for Arts
Special Minister of State
South Australia

The Hon Guy Barnett MP

Deputy Premier
Attorney-General
Minister for Justice, Corrections and Rehabilitation
Minister for Small Business, Trade and Consumer Affairs
Minister for Environment and Climate Change
Tasmania

The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP

Attorney-General
Minister for Planning
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence
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 2025-26 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 financial statements for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

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 2025-26

Our year in numbers

18

schemes in force, 17 nationally

5

schemes publicly notified

5

schemes approved

1

scheme extended

1

new association

102,823

association members subject to schemes, an increase of 2.7%

Our year in highlights

Approved the first scheme for the Association of Australian Certifiers, taking the number of approved schemes to 19.

See page 18

Picture: (L-R) Robert Marinelli (President, AAC), Jill Brookfield (CEO, AAC), Andreas Heger (CEO, PSA) and John Vines OAM (Chair, PSC) at the scheme certificate presentation.

Engaged with Victorian policy officers to progress changes to annual fee payments under the Professional Standards Regulations 2017 (Vic) to improve efficiency and reduce regulatory burden for regulated associations.

See page 29

Progressed an updated Guidance Note on Fees Payable and Assurance Reporting to reflect the new fee payment regime in NSW and Vic, and to provide further clarity on association annual fee and reporting requirements.

See page 29

Held a Professional Standards Forum in December 2025, providing an opportunity for associations from across the national system to explore the key challenges and emerging opportunities presented by artificial intelligence.

See page 40

Picture: Presenter Dr Ryan Payne at the December 2025 Professional Standards Forum.

Published an independent research report: *Benefits of Professional Standards Schemes,* examining the effect of professional standards legislation on strengthening professional practice, improving consumer protection, and enhancing trust in professional services across Australia.

See pages 41

Picture: *Benefits of Professional Standards Schemes* front cover page.

Chair's message

On behalf of my fellow members of the Professional Standards Councils, I am pleased to provide the 2025-26 Annual Report.

As with the 2024-25 reporting year, the Councils had another busy year – particularly on statutory decision-making and planning for the future of the national system of professional standards regulation.

Since 2022, the Councils' work has been guided by our strategic planning document, *Strategy 2025*. This document sets out the Councils' priorities under three broad 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 scheme performance.

Delivery

I am pleased to report that, throughout 2025-26, the Councils and Authority undertook extensive evaluation and planning work on a new draft strategic plan to replace *Strategy 2025*. The plan is currently being finalised in consultation with key stakeholders, and at the time of writing we are on track for publication later in 2026. The plan will build on the lessons learned and work delivered under *Strategy 2025* and sharpen our focus on areas where we can be most effective.

During the 2025-26 reporting year, the Councils also approved new schemes applied for by the following associations:

- Association of Australian Certifiers
- Australian Institute of Building Surveyors
- Australian Property Institute Valuers
- Strata Community Association (NSW)
- Surveyors Australia

The scheme approved for the Association of Australian Certifiers was its first, taking the number of associations with approved schemes to 19.

The Councils also delivered a forum on artificial intelligence presented by Dr Ryan Payne of the University of Canberra. The forum dealt with a range of contemporary issues raised by this emerging technology, which poses particular challenges for professional standards regulation. The forum was very well received, with a high level of engagement and participation, and the Councils expect to continue their focus on the implications of AI in the next reporting period.

Particular challenges continued in two sectors: the audit, accounting and consulting sector and the strata management sector. The Councils continue to actively monitor these issues and to work with associations and other regulators to address them. This is referred to in more detail in section 2 of this Report.

The Councils' research focus also continued through the reporting year, and I am pleased to note the publication in February 2026 of the independent research report, the *Benefits of Professional Standards Schemes,* conducted by Griffith University. This report draws on evidence from five occupational associations with schemes and experts in insurance, law and risk. It outlines several important benefits of professional standards schemes and is available on the Councils' website.

In addition, the monograph *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism* was published in March 2026, as the final academic output of our three-year Australian Research Council Linkage Project. Led by Griffith University in partnership with the Councils, the project investigated rebuilding trust and confidence in the building and construction sector in Australia.

New appointments

Two significant appointments were made in 2025-26. Jurisdictional Ministers appointed Dr Dominic Katter as the new Queensland nominee to the Councils in February 2026. Dominic is an experienced barrister with outstanding expertise in governance, organisational standards, regulatory integrity, arbitration/adjudication and statutory decision-making. We welcome Dominic and have already benefited from his contribution to the Councils.

The Councils also welcomed Andreas Heger as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Authority in February 2026. Andreas was previously the Executive Director of the NSW Bar Association. He brings a unique combination of practical experience in overseeing the administration of an association's professional standards scheme, as well as an academic legal background and extensive experience in State and Commonwealth government policy and strategy roles.

The Councils were delighted to welcome both appointees.

Departures

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Elizabeth Shearer to the Councils. Elizabeth was appointed for a second three-year term on the Councils in May 2023, but resigned following her election as the President-elect of the Law Council of Australia in December 2025. Elizabeth brought extensive and valuable legal and consumer protection expertise to the Councils over her two terms. We congratulate her on her important new role.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Darren Holder who acted as CEO over much of the reporting year, prior to the appointment of Andreas Heger in February 2026, and as Director, Professional Standards Regulation for several years prior to that. I formally record here Councils' appreciation for his significant contributions to the Professional Standards Authority and the Councils over this time.

Looking ahead

In last year's report I noted that the 2025-26 year would focus on both delivering core statutory functions as well as planning for future success. The coming year will be similar, but with a greater focus on implementation.

The publication of the new Councils' strategic plan will trigger a range of additional actions by the Councils and the Authority, including risk management planning, reviews of core documents and guidance materials, enhanced stakeholder engagement and other practical regulatory actions.

I look forward to a year of renewed commitment and focus on improving professional standards and consumer protection.

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: (L-R) Councils' members Dr Dominic Katter, Ms Lisa King, Prof Jenni Millbank, Mr Ross Springolo, Ms Elizabeth Trickett, Councils' Chair Mr John Vines OAM, Ms Rachel Webber, Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton, Mr Peter Martin and Mr Timothy Mellor.

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 (to appropriate amounts)
- 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 2026

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

Councils members

The Councils' members have diverse experience across a range of sectors and specialities, including law, health, accounting, financial management, governance, standards development, risk management, compliance, engineering, 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 and private sector boards and government inquiries. He was a member of the Fair Work Commission, Minimum Wages panel. He is currently the Chair of Coassemble Pty Ltd, and is a Director of Carroll and Richardson Pty Ltd.

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.

DR DOMINIC KATTER FCIArb, FSIArb, FHKICAdj, PRIMed, Adj

Dr Dominic Henley Katter is a barrister, arbitrator, adjudicator and conciliator, having served as a Senior Member of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, as a Member of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal and National Sports Tribunal and Commissioner for Queensland Police Service Reviews. Dr Katter has experience in governance, organisational standards and regulatory integrity.

Appointed to Queensland Council: 17 February 2026 – 16 February 2029.

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

Lisa King is Senior Policy Officer at Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and former Executive Director of the New South Wales Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects. With experience across architectural practice, research and teaching, she works closely with government and industry stakeholders on building reform and planning policy, advocating for consumer protection and equitable, sustainable built environments.

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

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, Tim has consistently been awarded 'Best Lawyers Australia' recognition for Planning and Environment, Native Title, and Commercial Litigation in South Australia. He is a member of the Law Foundation of South Australia Inc. For 25 years Tim served as an Officer in the Australian Army Legal Corps, attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. For the last 22 years he has served on the International Humanitarian Law Committee of Australian Red Cross.

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

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

Emeritus 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 on 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

Dr 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: 14 October 2025 – 13 October 2028

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.

During the period of her term Elizabeth was 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 – 31 December 2025. Term concluded in reporting period.

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.

ELIZABETH TRICKETT BSc, Grad Dip in Physiotherapy, BA LLB

Elizabeth Trickett is a lawyer in the ACT and a Senior Member of the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal managing civil and administrative claims including practitioner disciplinary cases.

She has a background in safety and quality in healthcare and practitioner regulation, accreditation of courses, the setting of standards of care, conduct and ethical obligations. She has a keen interest in practitioner engagement and education and communication between different professions and with clients.

Appointed to Australian Capital Territory Council: 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2028.

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 the Deputy Chair 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.

Picture: The Professional Standards Councils June 2026 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 a way for associations to enhance consumer confidence in the professional advice of their members.

People can have more trust in 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:

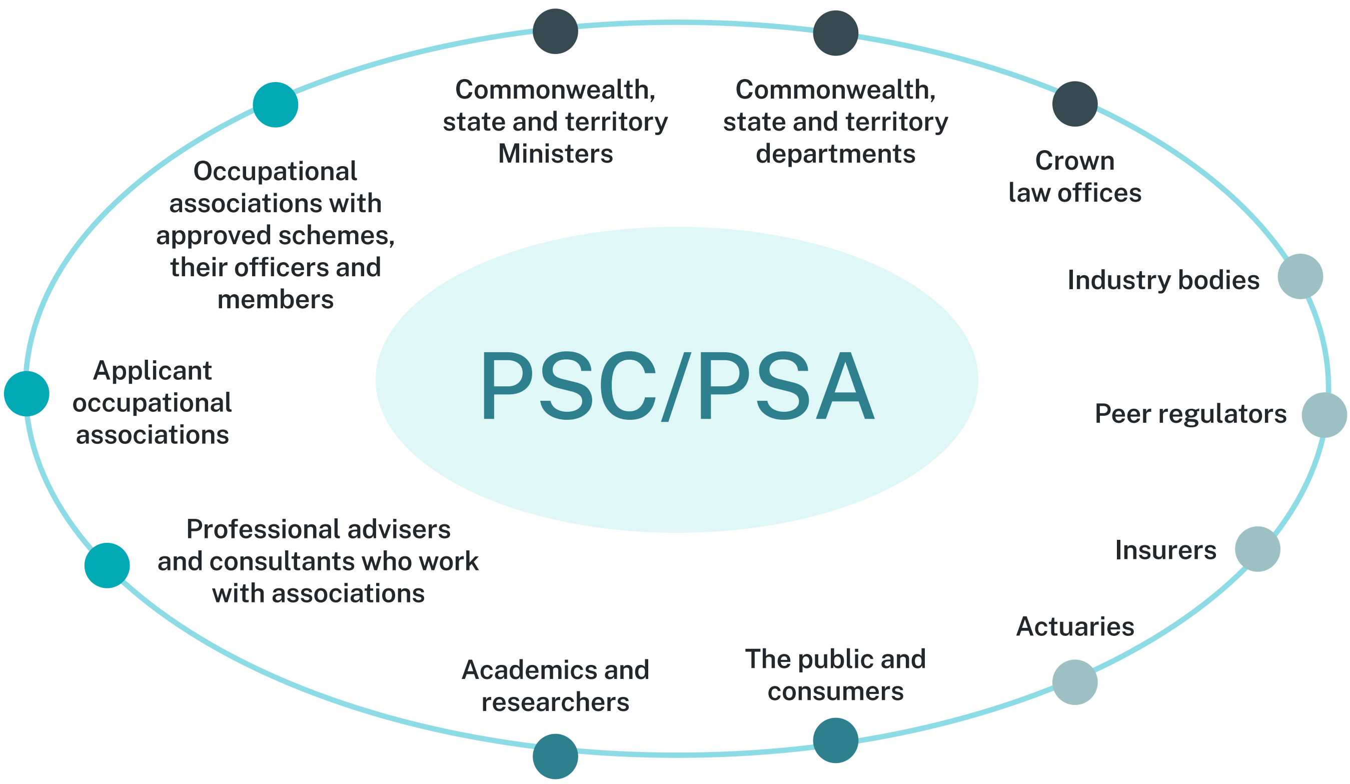
- increase consumer protection
- develop their systems to regulate and improve professional standards
- comply with relevant legislative and related requirements.

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 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.

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.

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 in force as at 30 June 2026

- 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

Section 1

Reporting on the Professional Standards Councils' work and activities

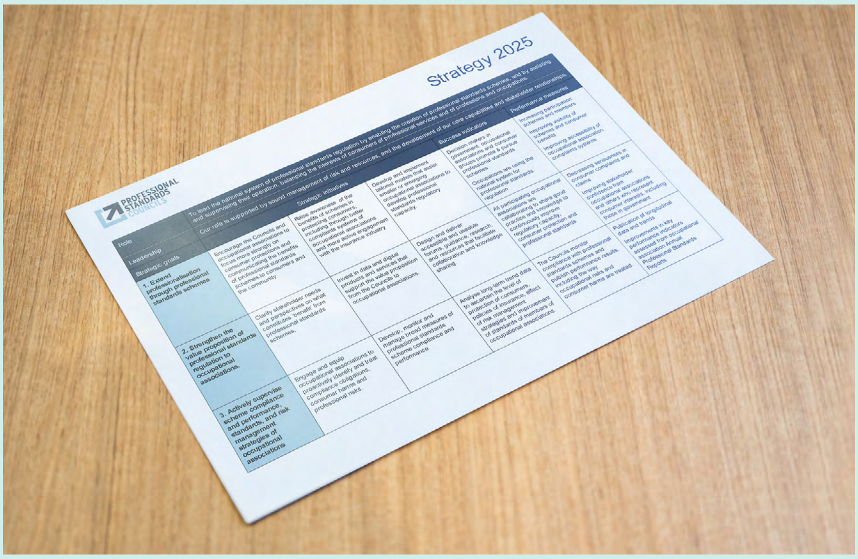
The Professional Standards Councils

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 aim to assist diverse professions and occupations — both established and emerging — to participate in the national system and deliver better outcomes for consumers across Australia.



Our three strategic goals are detailed below, along with a summary of our key actions and outcomes (further details are provided throughout this report). We note this is the last year of reporting on *Strategy 2025*, with a new strategic plan expected to replace this in the next reporting year, which will build on this work and further enhance our focus.

Extend professionalisation through professional standards schemes

Actions and results in the reporting period

- Approved five new professional standards schemes across the built environment sector, including four replacement schemes and one new scheme for the Association of Australian Certifiers. This brings the number of associations with approved schemes to 19.
- Engaged with eight associations regarding prospective applications for their first professional standards schemes.
- Maintained engagement with smaller or emerging associations, and smaller prospective associations, to assist with increasing regulatory capacity.
- Engaged with the NSW Strata and Property Services Commissioner and NSW Fair Trading, and other regulators through the Interjurisdictional Strata Forum, in relation to the strata management and property sector; and the NSW Building Commission in relation to the building sector.
- Facilitated increased scheme participation, with 102,823 scheme participants representing a 2.7% increase on last year.

Strengthen the value proposition of professional standards regulation to occupational associations

Actions and results in the reporting period

- Published the independent research report, the *Benefits of Professional Standards Schemes,* in February 2026, prepared by Griffith University. The report outlined the benefits of key elements of professional standards schemes, based on the perspectives of five associations with schemes and industry experts (see page 41 for findings).
- Contributed to finalisation of the Australian Research Council Linkage Project academic monograph, *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism*, published in March 2026. As the final academic output, it provides a collection of chapters on research findings and conclusions from the project. This included the Councils' contribution on professionalisation and the role of meta-regulation (see page 41 for further information).
- Facilitated collaboration and knowledge sharing through engagements and delivery of a professional standards forum.
- Engaged with Victorian policy officers to progress changes to the Victorian professional standards regulations, which simplified the annual member fees for Vic-based associations.
- Continued to seek feedback on the scheme application process to evaluate effectiveness, and received positive survey feedback results (see page 26).

Engagement

- Continued to engage with associations with existing schemes, and associations seeking to apply for their first schemes, to increase regulatory capacity, identify and manage risks, and enhance professional standards and consumer protection.

	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
Presentations and events	4	4	8
Stakeholders engaged	86	69	63

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:

	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24[1]
Website page views	57,135	97,352	56,626
Website sessions	33,558	68,458	33,026
Website users	24,304[2]	58,497	22,333
New LinkedIn follower increase	10%	6%	9%

Each year we measure stakeholder satisfaction with our services through a survey. A stakeholder satisfaction survey for the December 2025 Forum was analysed, and used to evaluate delivery.

Professional standards forums

	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
Net promoter score	29	25	40
Overall engagement	91%	90%	80%

Note 1: Website analytics were unavailable for a period of months in this reporting period, reducing the number reported.
Note 2: There are limitations on the website analytics for year-on-year comparisons. This is due to various factors which may contribute to the year-on-year change such as the number and types of schemes subject to public notification, forums and topics, and published resources which can drive traffic to the website.

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 assessed from occupational associations' APSRs in our combined Annual Report.
- Implemented a revised APSR Template and Guidance for the 2025 reporting year.
- Engaged with 14 associations on compliance and risk issues, annual reporting feedback and requirements, and additional risk reporting on areas of identified risks.
- Monitored and engaged with associations in relation to sector specific issues, including in the audit, accounting and consulting sector, and strata management sector.
- Reviewed and strengthened our risk-based approach to assessing scheme performance through enhanced analysis of association and sector contexts and risks and associated risk management strategies, to inform feedback on identified risk areas and risk management actions.
- Requested additional risk management reporting from three associations, in addition to monitoring ongoing risk reporting requirements for two associations.
- Updated the Guidance Note on Fees Payable and Assurance Reporting to reflect changes to the annual fee payment regime under NSW and Victorian professional standards regulations, and to further clarify annual fee and reporting requirements.

Section 2

Reporting on professional standards schemes

CEO’s report

This is my first report as CEO / Executive Director of the Professional Standards Authority. The following section of the report outlines the activities of associations in fulfilling their responsibilities under their professional standards schemes and their implementation of risk management strategies. It also details the work of the Authority on behalf of the Councils.

Our work with associations

During the reporting period, we engaged with 14 associations on scheme applications, two associations on scheme extensions, 14 associations on compliance and risks issues, reporting and other matters, and supervised 18 associations in operating their schemes and compliance with professional standards legislation. The PSA supported the Councils to approve five professional standards schemes, all in the built environment sector. The Councils also requested formal additional risk reporting for three associations, which is imposed over and above the annual reporting requirements for associations with schemes.

The Authority also worked closely with the Association of Australian Certifiers, whose first Scheme was publicly notified and approved in the reporting year, to commence on 1 July 2026. This is the most recent association to commence their first scheme since the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors and Strata Community Association (NSW) in 2021.

Association annual reporting

Associations with approved professional standards schemes are required to submit an Annual Professional Standards Report (APSR) to the Councils for the previous calendar year each year. It aims to assist associations in meeting their scheme obligations and continuously improve regulatory capacity.

A key area of focus for the Councils is risk identification and mitigation by associations. During the reporting period, we reviewed and improved our risk-based approach to assessing association annual reports. We enhanced our analysis of individual association and sector-level risks and related treatments, to provide more tailored feedback on specific risk areas to inform risk management actions.

We will continue to refine this approach to assist associations in identifying and managing risks, alongside other improvements to the annual reporting and feedback process.

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 year, the Authority worked with Victorian policy officers to assist with progressing changes to the Professional Standards Regulations 2017 (Vic) to replace quarterly annual fee payments with annual payments. The same change was made to the NSW professional standards regulations last year.

This change significantly reduces the regulatory burden for associations with schemes approved under Victorian legislation. We will continue to work with other jurisdictions to progress similar changes in the coming reporting period.

Renewal of intergovernmental agreements

The intergovernmental agreements that underpin the national professional standards framework, which are outlined later in Section 3 of this report, expired on 30 June 2026. Throughout the reporting year, the Authority and Councils engaged in a review process with departmental officers from all jurisdictions, resulting in new agreements taking effect from 1 July 2026. These agreements secure the continued operation of the national professional standards framework for a further five years and the role of the Authority as the support agency for the national Professional Standards Councils.

Strategic planning

Considerable work occurred in the reporting year to develop the councils' new Strategic Plan. Accordingly, this annual report will be the last reporting on the goals and initiatives in *Strategy 2025*. The new strategic plan is almost finalised at time of writing and is expected to be launched in September 2026. This will set out the Councils' strategic goals and initiatives for the next three years.

Thanks

I commenced in this role in February 2026. Accordingly, the majority of the reporting year and the activities outlined in this section were achieved under the leadership of Darren Holder, who returned to his substantive position as Director, Professional Standards Regulation upon my appointment. I would like to record my thanks for his warm welcome and assistance stepping into the role, as well as acknowledge his leadership while acting as CEO and his work driving the continuous improvement approach to the PSA's support of the Professional Standards Councils statutory functions over the past four years.

I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of all the staff of the Authority and Councils members in a busy year. Next year is an exciting year with the renewal of our strategic plan and an opportunity to further improve the national professional standards framework, and I look forward to reporting on achievements under this Plan in next year's report.

Andreas Heger

Chief Executive Officer / Executive Director

Professional Standards Authority

Professional standards schemes overview

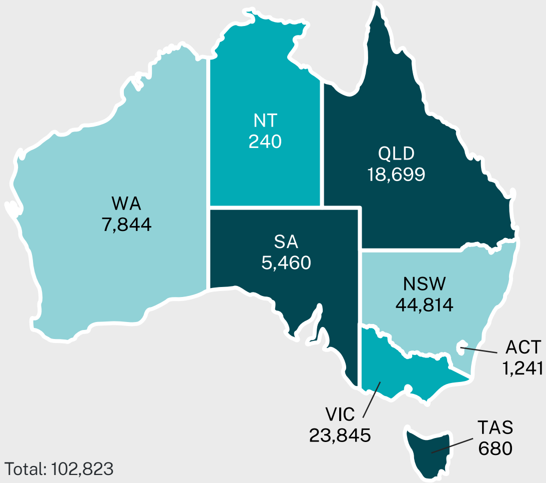
Each professional standards scheme is a regulatory instrument with a maximum duration of five years, with a possible extension of no more than 12 months. The legislation does not permit automatic renewal of a scheme. If an association wishes to maintain continuity between the end of a current scheme 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 2026, 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 102,823 (up from 100,097 during 2024-25).

Figure 1:

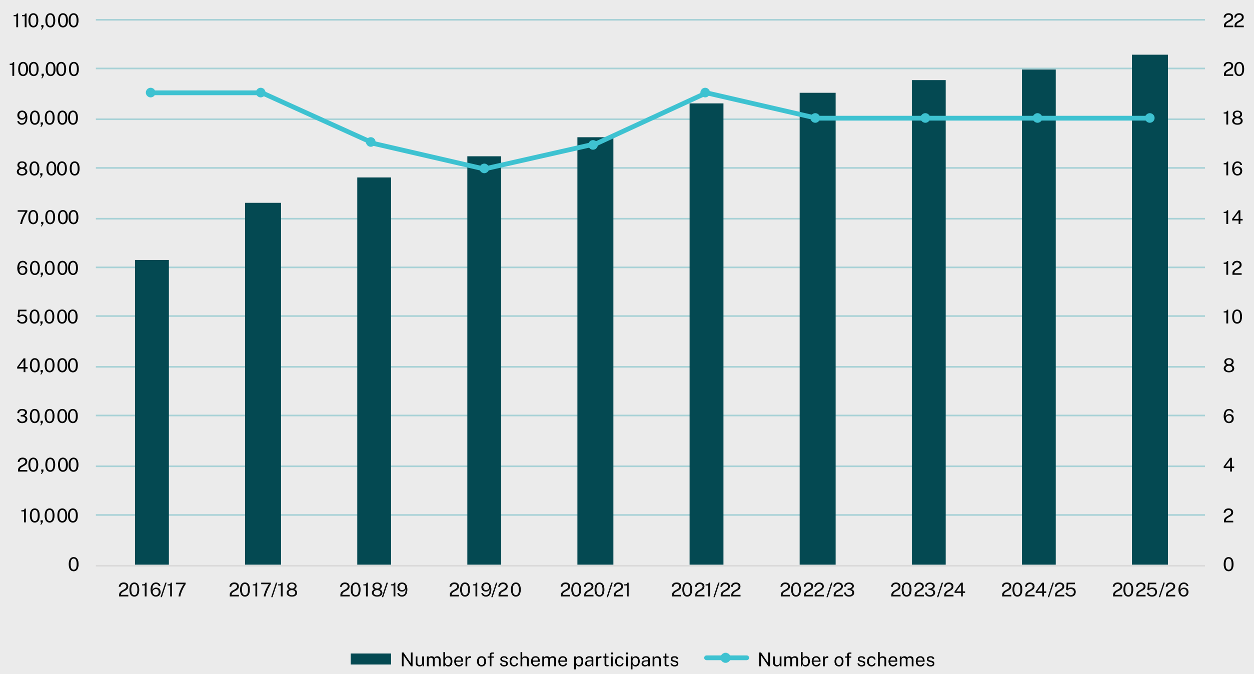
Number of persons by state and territory in professional standards schemes



Total: 102,823

Figure 2:

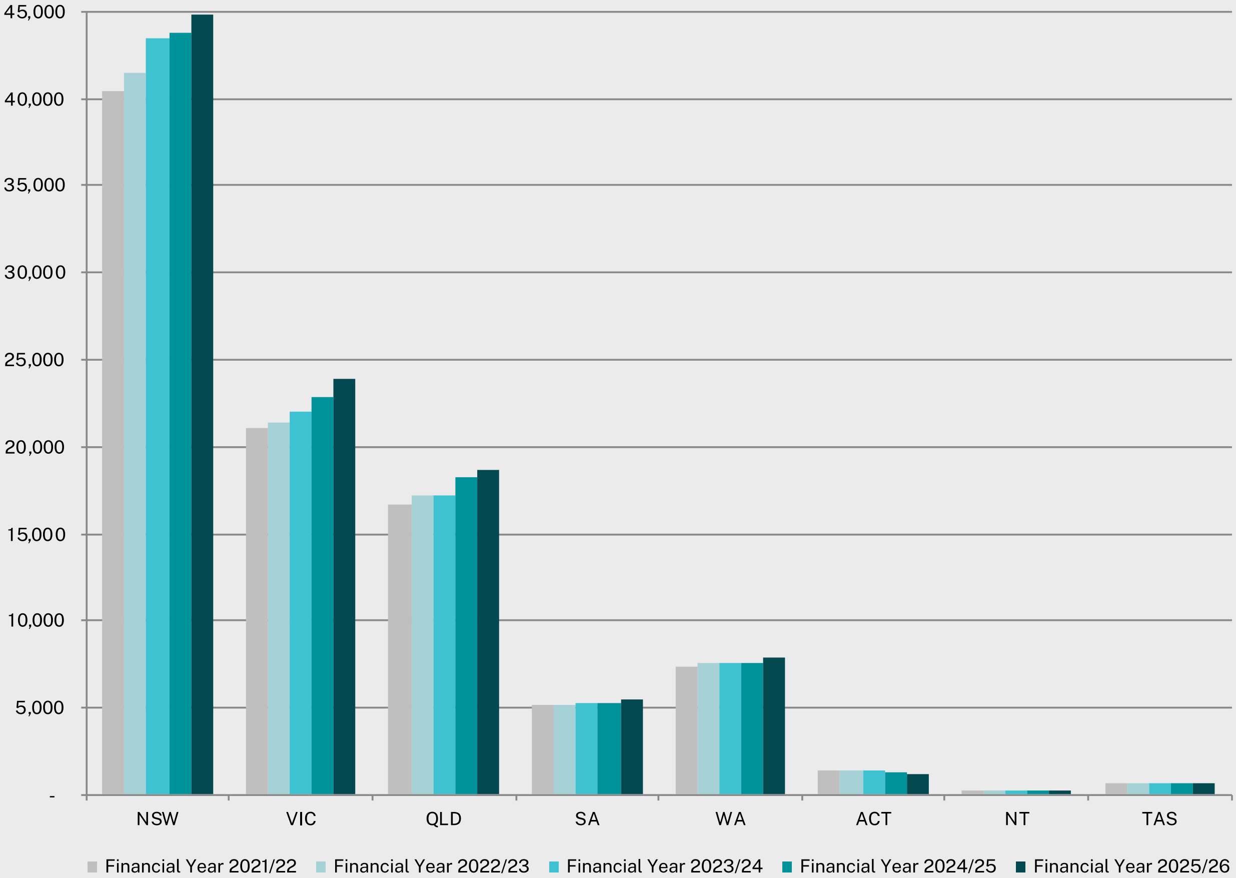
Number of associations operating a scheme and scheme participants over the past 10 years



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 2025 to 30 June 2026

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	1,556	$2m (HDC: no limit)	01/01/25	31/12/29
			$1m to $2m (HDC: $10m)	01/07/21	30/06/26
AIBS	Building Surveyors	941	2m to $75m (HDC: $75m)	13/07/19	12/07/25+
CA ANZ	Accountants	33,350	2m to $75m (HDC: $75m)	13/07/25	12/07/30
CPA	Accountants	7,508	2m to $75m (HDC: $75m)	21/08/19	20/08/25+
LSNSW	Lawyers	21,850	2m to $75m (HDC: no limit)	21/08/25	20/08/30
			$1.5m to $10m (HDC: no limit)	22/11/24	21/11/29
NSW Bar	Barristers	2,338	$1.5m	01/07/25	30/06/30
SAus	Surveyors	406	$2m to $10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/20	30/06/26+
SCA	Strata Managers	1,983	$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	1,086	$1.5m (HDC: $50m)	01/07/24	30/06/29
QLS	Lawyers	8,465	$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	1,916	$1.5m to $10m (HDC: $50m)	01/07/22	30/06/27
SABA	Barristers	253	$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	4,197	$1m to $10m (HDC: $20m)	01/09/21	31/08/26
IPA	Accountants	5,300	$2m to $10m (HDC: $75m)	01/01/22	31/12/26
LIV	Lawyers	7,184	$1.5m to $10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/22	30/06/28+
Vic Bar	Barristers	1,729	$2m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/25	30/06/30
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	2,432	$1.5m to $10m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/24	30/06/29
WABA	Barristers	329	$2m (HDC: no limit)	01/07/25	30/06/30
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	**102,823**				

+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.

Fourteen associations have now completed applications using the SAF. This includes five associations which used the SAF to complete their applications during the 2025–26 period. Four of these associations provided feedback on the application process, which indicates:

- associations considered the Authority provides good support and assistance throughout the application process, with an average score of 8 out of 10
- scheme requirements were appropriate and proportionate, with an average score of 8 out of 10
- associations feel confident and well supported in administering their schemes, with an average rating exceeding 7 out of 10
- a high level of satisfaction with the SAF process, with an average satisfaction score of 9 out of 10.

Public notification

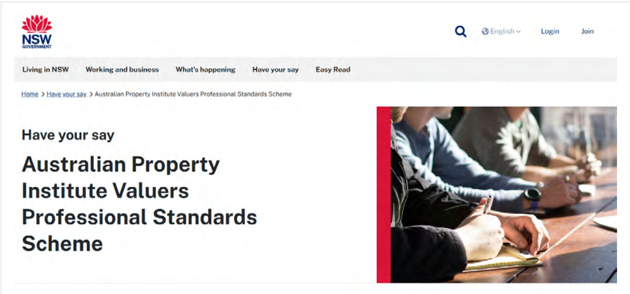
Before approving a scheme, the Councils must publicly invite comments and submissions on the proposed scheme by publishing notices in state and national newspapers. Any interested stakeholder or members of the public may submit comments for the Councils consideration. The Councils also alert potentially 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).

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

During the 2025-26 reporting period, five schemes were publicly notified. Of these, four were replacement schemes for schemes nearing expiry, and one was a new scheme for the Association of Australian Certifiers.



Picture: A screenshot of the public notification for the Australian Property Institute Valuers proposed professional standards scheme as featured on the NSW Government 'Have your say' website for public consultation. Text reads: Have your say Australian Property Institute Valuers professional standards scheme. An image of a person taking notes with pen and paper is featured on the right of the page.

Scheme approval

The relevant Council must first satisfy itself that the applicant meets the definition of an 'occupational association' under professional standards legislation.

This is necessary to be eligible to apply for a scheme. The Council is then required to consider the following matters prior to approving the scheme application:

- 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 five schemes approved (see Table 2).

Table 2:

Schemes approved 2025-26

State	Association	Council decision	Commencement
NSW	AAC	20 February 2026	1 July 2026
NSW	AIBS	20 February 2026	1 July 2026
NSW	SAus	20 February 2026	1 July 2026
Vic	APIV	18 May 2026	1 September 2026
NSW	SCA (NSW)	25 May 2026	1 July 2026

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 jurisdictional 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 order for the scheme to apply in that jurisdiction.

During the reporting period, two schemes were gazetted or notified in each state and territory. A further five schemes were gazetted or notified in some states and territories. We note two of these were schemes approved in the previous reporting year.

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 2026:

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

Scheme expiry and extensions of duration

The duration of a professional standards scheme approved by the Councils cannot exceed five years, unless the Minister responsible for professional standards legislation in the relevant jurisdiction extends the expiry date. This may only occur on application by an association for a single period of no more than 12 months.

During the reporting period, there were two requests for a Minister to extend the period for which a scheme was in force. The Minister approved the extension for the first scheme which is now due to expire in the 2027-2028 reporting period. The second extension is still under consideration and relates to a scheme due to expire in the next reporting period.

The following five schemes expired during the reporting period, with replacement schemes coming into effect:

- AIBS
- CA ANZ
- CPA
- SAus
- SCA (NSW).

Scheme reviews, amendment or revocation

During the reporting period, the Councils did not review any schemes. There were no applications or directions to prepare or approve instruments to amend or revoke a scheme.

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 2025–26 financial year, the following fees were received:

- $30,000 in scheme application fees
- $5,113,550 in annual fees[1]
- $563 in interest payable on overdue annual fees.

Associations paid their annual fees within 30 days of the due date, except for three 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	$1[3]	$50	59	30 September 2025
APIV	Vic	$74	$3,500	42	31 March 2026
CPA	NSW	$489	$1,200	Multiple periods	Multiple periods

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.

In the last reporting period, the Councils reported on changes to the Professional Standards Regulation 2024 (NSW) including 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.

The purpose of these changes was to improve efficiency and reduce regulatory, administrative and resource burdens for both the associations and the Authority. The changes have been strongly supported by occupational associations.

The Councils recommended each jurisdiction make similar changes to replace quarterly payments with annual payments in their respective regulations, as occurred in NSW.

During the reporting period, the Authority engaged with Victorian policy officers to assist with progressing similar changes to replace quarterly payments with annual payments. The updated Professional Standards Regulations 2017 (Vic) came into effect on 28 April 2026 including this change. This means associations with schemes approved under NSW and Vic professional standards regulations are only required to run reports, reconcile numbers and make payments once each year, rather than up to four times a year.

Engagement with jurisdictional policy officers indicates that most other jurisdictions support the changes and intend to implement the same reform.

Updated Guidance Note on Fees Payable and Assurance Reporting

During the reporting period, the Councils progressed updates to the Guidance Note on Fees Payable and Assurance Reporting (Guidance Note) to reflect the changes made under the NSW and Victorian professional standards regulations in relation to fee payments, and to provide further clarity on annual fee and reporting requirements for associations. The Guidance Note includes updated information in relation to:

- the application fee for approval, amendment or revocation of a scheme in all jurisdictions
- fee payment requirements for new/additional members who become subject to a scheme
- annual membership assurance reporting requirements, and
- annual fee payment periods and due dates.

The Guidance Note is available on the Councils' website.

Note 1: This is based on actual annual fees received.
Note 2: Interest is rounded to the nearest dollar.
Note 3: the Acting Chief Executive Officer determined to waive the interest payable under clause 9(2)(d) of the *Professional Standards Regulations 2017* (Vic) due to the nominal amount.

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. This includes professional standards and the protection of the consumers of 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 – with a particular focus on risk identification and mitigation.

Association annual reporting requirements

Associations operating professional standards schemes are required to submit an annual report to the Councils for the previous calendar year each 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, enforcement, continuing professional development and insurance data)
- responding to consumer complaints and claims, including information on:
  - complaints, including 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 actioned
- 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 diverse occupational sectors. To the extent possible, this information is compared over time and across associations. This provides the Councils with insights on the operation and effect of schemes and is an important part of the Councils' supervision approach.

Reporting template and guidelines

In 2025, 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.

The reporting Template and Guidance were revised to clarify and provide additional guidance on information to be reported. This included additional information and guidance in relation to reporting on:

- any proposed changes to significant documents which may affect the scheme
- responding to Councils' feedback

- long-term unresolved complaints
- notifications, claims and settlements data, and claims over 50% of the monetary ceiling
- analysis of complaints and claims
- exemptions and higher discretionary caps, and
- annual membership assurance reporting.

The additional requirements reflected identified areas of improvement for associations. Additional guidance responded to previous results from satisfaction surveys, observations of association annual reporting, and association enquiries and engagements during the year. These engagements and changes aim to support associations in developing regulatory capacity and continuous improvement.

Reporting timeliness

All eighteen regulated associations provided their annual reports on time.

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:

- provided feedback letters to associations on their 2024 APSR results, identifying areas for continuous improvement
- targeted engagements with associations operating schemes to address identified risks, as well as compliance and performance concerns
- sought information from relevant associations on actions taken in response to emerging risks, including in the audit and accounting sector and legal sector
- required additional risk management reporting in relation to scheme administration, compliance and performance, the risk profile of the built environment sector and risks in the strata management sector.

The Councils also engaged 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:

- 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. The Councils are particularly interested in actions taken to address risks.

Accounting

Actions observed across the accounting associations included:

- all associations invested in improvements to continuing professional development (CPD) compliance recording and monitoring through new digital tools, additional resources and/or changes to reporting requirements and monitoring processes
- all associations broadened processes or activities for monitoring compliance with risk management and quality management standards to enhance oversight and reinforce obligations
- all associations responded to new/emerging risks associated with legislative changes to Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing (AML-CTF), including through training, webinars, educational tools and other resources, or updating monitoring processes to require confirmation of compliance with the new legislative requirements
- all associations delivered education/training, webinars and other resources, tools and practical support to improve and reinforce awareness of the scheme and scheme obligations, and other regulatory requirements
- two associations strengthened complaints management systems or processes through updating systems for improved recording and monitoring of complaints data and trends, or implementing alternative dispute resolution to facilitate improved complaint handling and resolution of complaints.

Solicitors

Actions observed across solicitor associations included:

- four associations responded to new/emerging risks associated with regulatory changes to AML-CTF including through information sessions, webinars, conferences, education and other guidance material and resources
- four associations delivered guidelines, training, CPD programs and other tools for members in response to risks associated with responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI)
- four associations continued to provide support services, guidance, CPD and training to address risks associated with workplace conduct, ethical behaviour, harassment and/or lawyer wellbeing
- three associations continued to respond to cybersecurity related risks including through guidelines, CPD, practice visits, seminars, guidance materials and communications to members.

Barristers

Actions observed across bar associations included:

- all associations continued to address cybersecurity related risks including through tailored cyber insurance policies and/or guidelines, CPD, education, conferences, member communications and other educational resources for members
- all associations responded to risks associated with professional and ethical conduct, harassment and wellbeing including through updated policies/procedures, new or additional education and CPD sessions, and other support and educational material
- three associations addressed risks associated with AI including through guidelines/guidance, CPD and resource hubs for members
- one association updated its IT system to prevent non-compliant CPD submissions to proactively identify and address CPD non-compliance.

Built environment and other professions

Actions observed across the built environment/other sector included:

- all associations delivered a combination of presentations, newsletters, educations sessions, updated website content, and other guidance materials or communications to provide information to members about the scheme and/or scheme requirements
- all associations delivered initiatives in relation to risks associated with ethical conduct including through progressing reviews or implementing updated codes of ethics, providing new or updated educational resources for members in relation to mandatory ethics CPD and/or enhancing processes to monitor compliance with ethical requirements
- three associations strengthened scheme administration including through changing governance structures, appointing additional resources, investing in new scheme management and compliance systems or upgrades
- three associations improved compliance monitoring processes through developing annual declarations, compliance procedures and documentation, and/or implementing more systematic monitoring of member's compliance with scheme obligations

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 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.

Some data reported is not directly comparable year-on-year and over time due to differences/changes in data collection methods or availability/reporting of data from external sources or members. 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.

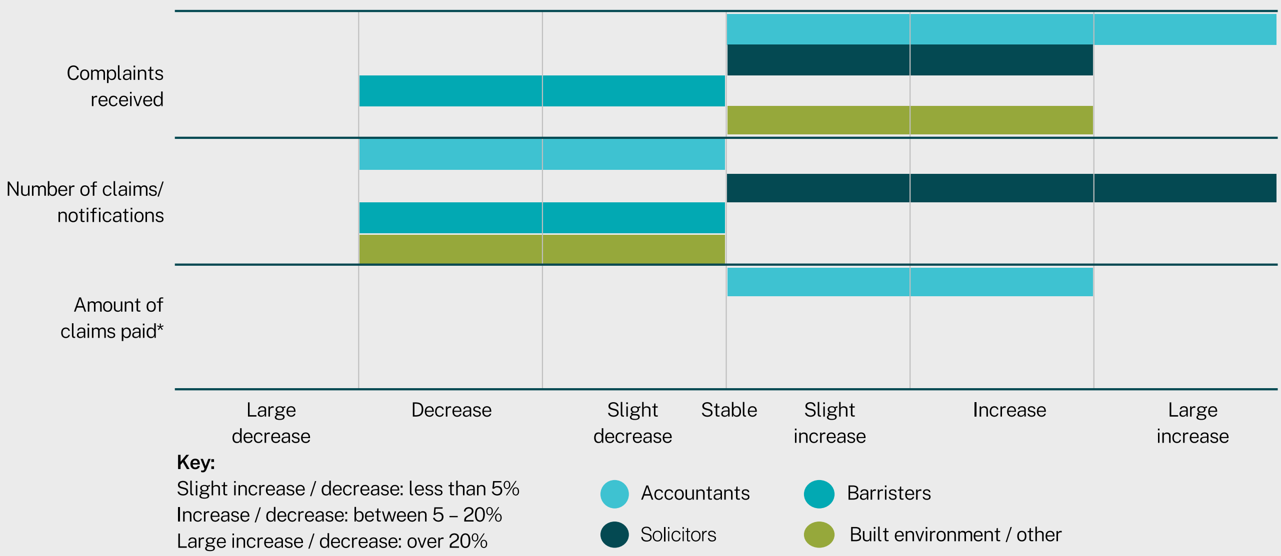
Complaints and claims

The information and data presented within the graph below identifies the trends in complaints and claims reported by associations between 2024 and 2025.

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

Figure 4:

Industry sector comparison in complaints/claims 2024 to 2025



*Unable to compare across the full sector for Built environment/other, Barristers and Solicitors

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 2025 APSRs suggests an overall increase in total complaints in three sectors of varying degrees, although not all associations reported an increase.

Associations are expected to 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:

- 2024: 16 of 18 associations reported use of complaints and claims data to inform risk management strategies (representing 89% of associations)
- 2025: 16 of 18 associations reported use of complaints and claims data to inform risk management strategies (representing 89% of associations). We note that the two associations not reporting use differ between 2024 and 2025.

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.

Emerging and ongoing risks

Two sectors required additional monitoring and engagement by the Councils due to ongoing risks to professional standards and consumer protection.

Audit, accounting and consulting

In the audit, accounting and consulting sector, the work of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services again led to revelations of unethical conduct in large firms. The most recent examples of this conduct included breaches of client trust and confidentiality, and failure to protect a whistleblower, at KPMG. This follows revelations of widespread examination cheating and misuse of confidential information at KPMG and PwC respectively.

The Councils engaged with the relevant occupational association, CA ANZ, on multiple occasions throughout the reporting period. This included the Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel of CA ANZ attending a meeting of the Councils to provide information regarding the CA ANZ response to these issues.

Concerned by incorrect reporting of the affect of the CA ANZ professional standards scheme, the Councils issued a statement on 30 June 2026 reminding professionals that they do not have limited liability in respect of damages arising from breaches of trust, fraud or dishonesty. The Councils were concerned that misreporting of the extent of protections would undermine the incentive to act ethically provided by the liability cap. The statement is available here.

The Councils reminded all persons providing services under a professional standards scheme that they must act ethically and lawfully at all times. The Councils will continue to monitor the actions of CA ANZ and their impact on addressing ethical standards in the sector, particularly large firms.

At the time of writing, the Commonwealth Government is consulting on potentially significant reforms to the overarching legal and governance framework for the sector. This is expected to have significant implications for the way the sector is regulated in future. The Councils will continue to monitor developments and work with associations and Commonwealth bodies to provide assistance.

Strata management

In the NSW strata management sector, consumers and the NSW Government continued to express concerns arising from unethical conduct. This included the payment of commissions to strata managers on insurance, undisclosed payments by service providers to strata managers, and undisclosed third-party transactions.

These issues became a significant area of focus for the Councils during the application by SCA (NSW) for a replacement professional standards scheme during the reporting period. Various submissions, including those from industry consumer groups, expressed specific concerns and made constructive recommendations for improvements by SCA (NSW). The Councils were pleased that SCA (NSW) accepted several of these recommendations and committed to implement further changes.

The Councils also noted that the NSW Government was implementing significant reforms in the sector to enhance consumer protections, which complement the statutory objectives of the Councils.

Given the ongoing consumer risks in the sector, and the need to continue improving professional standards and consumer protection, the Councils considered that the SCA (NSW) scheme should be approved for a period of three years rather than the five years initially sought by SCA (NSW). The Councils' full announcement is available here.

The Councils will continue to work with SCA (NSW), the NSW Strata and Property Services Commissioner and consumers to improve outcomes in the sector.

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.

2024:

- 11 of 18 associations reported use of elements of root cause analysis (representing 61% of associations)
- 10 of these 11 associations reported elements of risk management strategies were informed by root cause analysis (representing 91%)

2025:

- 9 of 18 associations reported use of elements of root cause analysis (representing 50% of associations.
- all of these 9 associations reported elements of risk management strategies were informed by root cause analysis (representing 100%).

Some of the associations which did not report use of root cause analysis this year reported using other data analysis activities, tools and resources to analyse data and risks to inform risk management responses.

While use of elements of root cause analysis is still encouraging, we consider that some associations require a better understanding of the methodology and application of root cause analysis for analysing certain types of risks. We intend to address this over the coming reporting period by providing further practical guidance, which should further inform and improve risk management strategies in future years.

Professional indemnity insurance

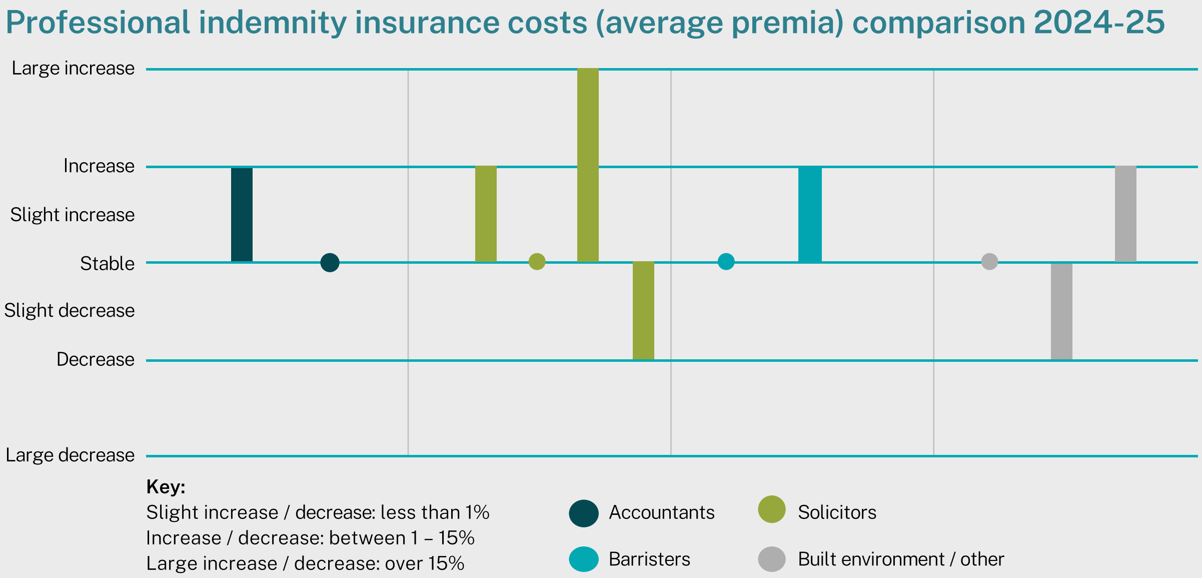
The Councils' reporting requirements encourage sourcing of insurance data and market information (where available) by associations to inform risk identification.

Associations which reported on the insurance market in the 2025 reporting period identified the following observations:

- the risk environment, risk profiles and strict controls or risk management measures are relevant to the availability, policy terms and cost of insurance in several sectors
- premia for some association members, and/or professions or sectors, are affected by individual member claims history, and/or claims activity in the market more generally
- premia are influenced by factors such as the insurer, areas of practice or specialty, level of coverage and claims history for some associations
- increased or decreased market capacity and competition were observed by some associations as relevant to the availability and cost of insurance, particularly in restricted markets or markets with limited providers for the profession/sector
- higher risk services or activities and/or higher risk sectors may affect the availability and cost of insurance for some association members and/or sectors
- global events, economic factors, geopolitical tensions and increased regulatory requirements or expectations were observed by some associations as relevant factors in relation to the insurance market conditions, insurance availability and pricing
- insurance availability or the scope of policies covering cybersecurity and insurer pricing may be affected by increased regulation in relation to cyber and privacy, or cyber related risks or exposures for some associations.

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:



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 2025 APSR data against the 2024 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 2024 and 2025 annual reporting periods. Whether the average cost of premia in 2025 increased, decreased or remained stable in comparison to 2024 is compared across sectors.

The average cost of professional indemnity insurance increased for members of five of the 11 associations that provided comparable data in 2024 and 2025. Of these 11 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
- comparing the average change in premia costs, which are dependent on the insurance provider and level of coverage
- 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, solicitor and barrister sectors. There were 20 claims in 2025 compared to 26 in 2024 and 13 in 2023.

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.

Four 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: 2024 to 2025

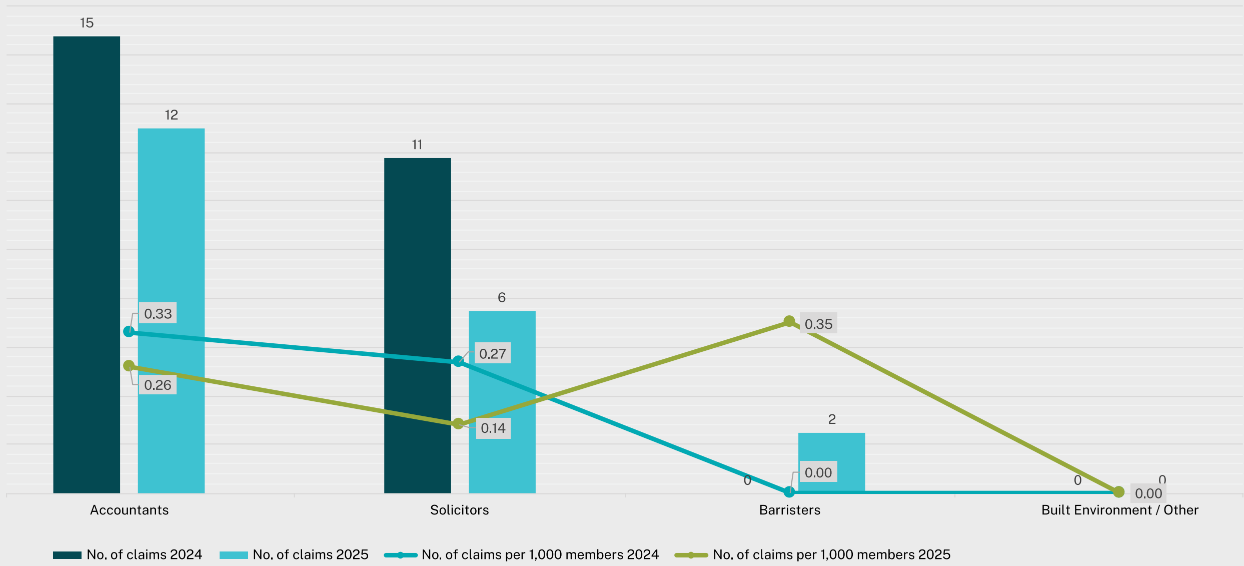


Figure 7:

Claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling per 1,000 members comparison trend: 2022 to 2025

The four-year comparison is based on the number of claims reported across the accountant, solicitor, barrister and built environment/other sectors (between 2022–2025). 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 2022 2023, 2024 or 2025 or the barrister sector in 2022, 2023 or 2024.

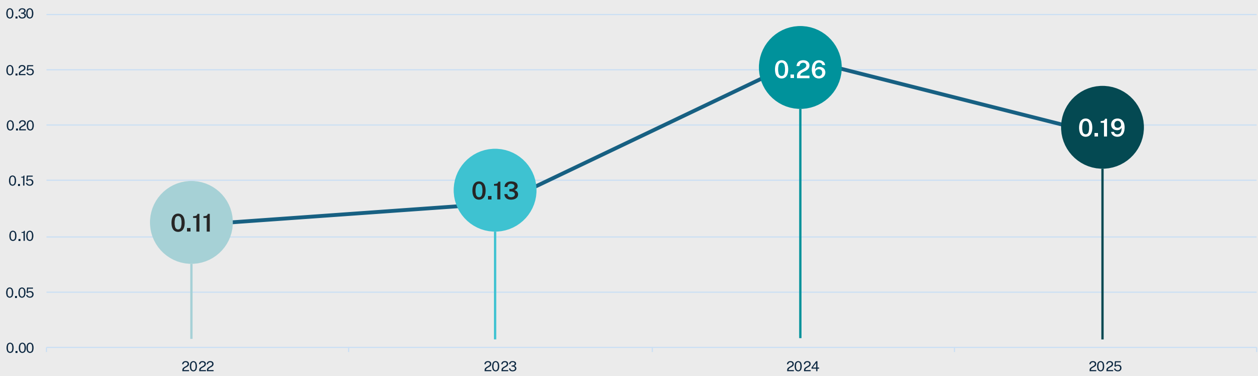
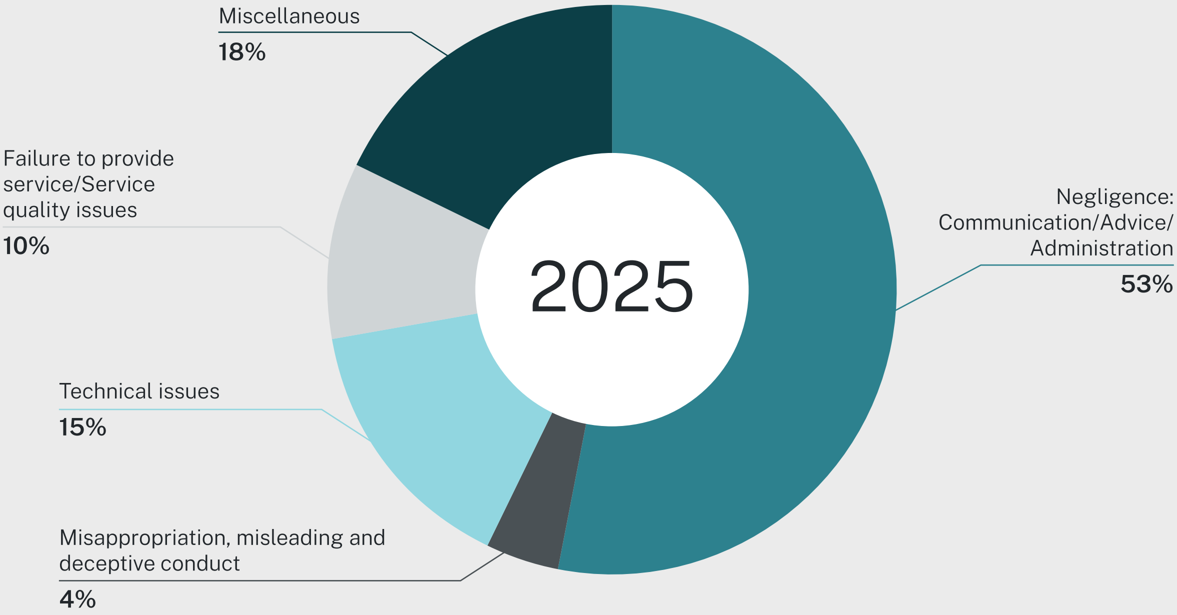
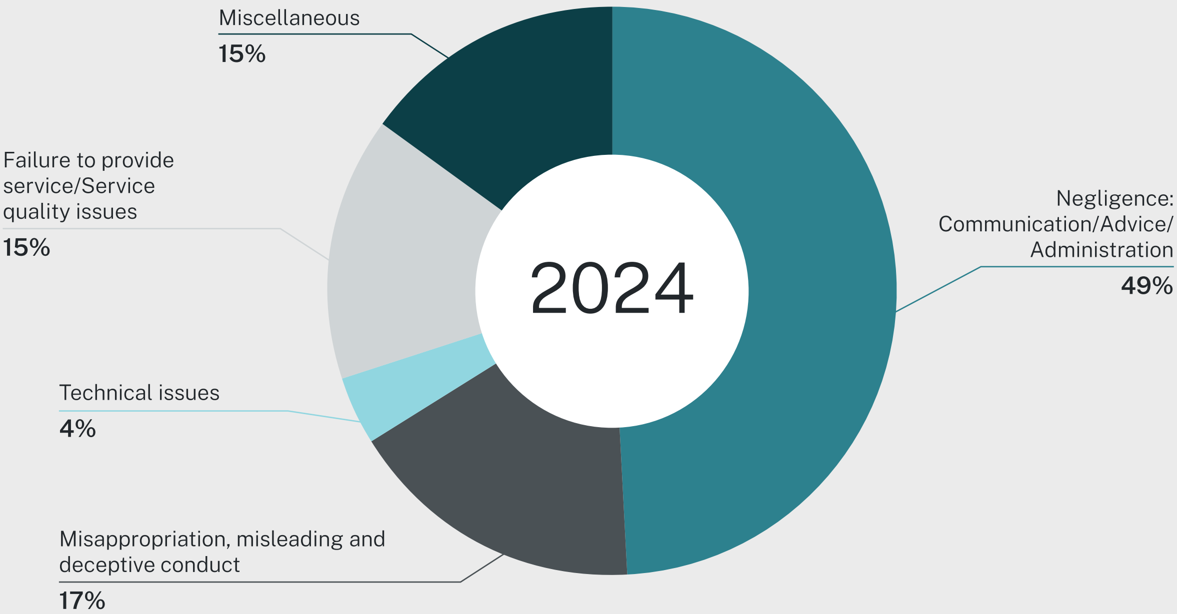


Figure 8:

Causes for claims exceeding 50% of the monetary ceiling

The following graphs categorise the causes of claims reported by associations for the 20 claims reported in 2025 and 26 claims reported in 2024.



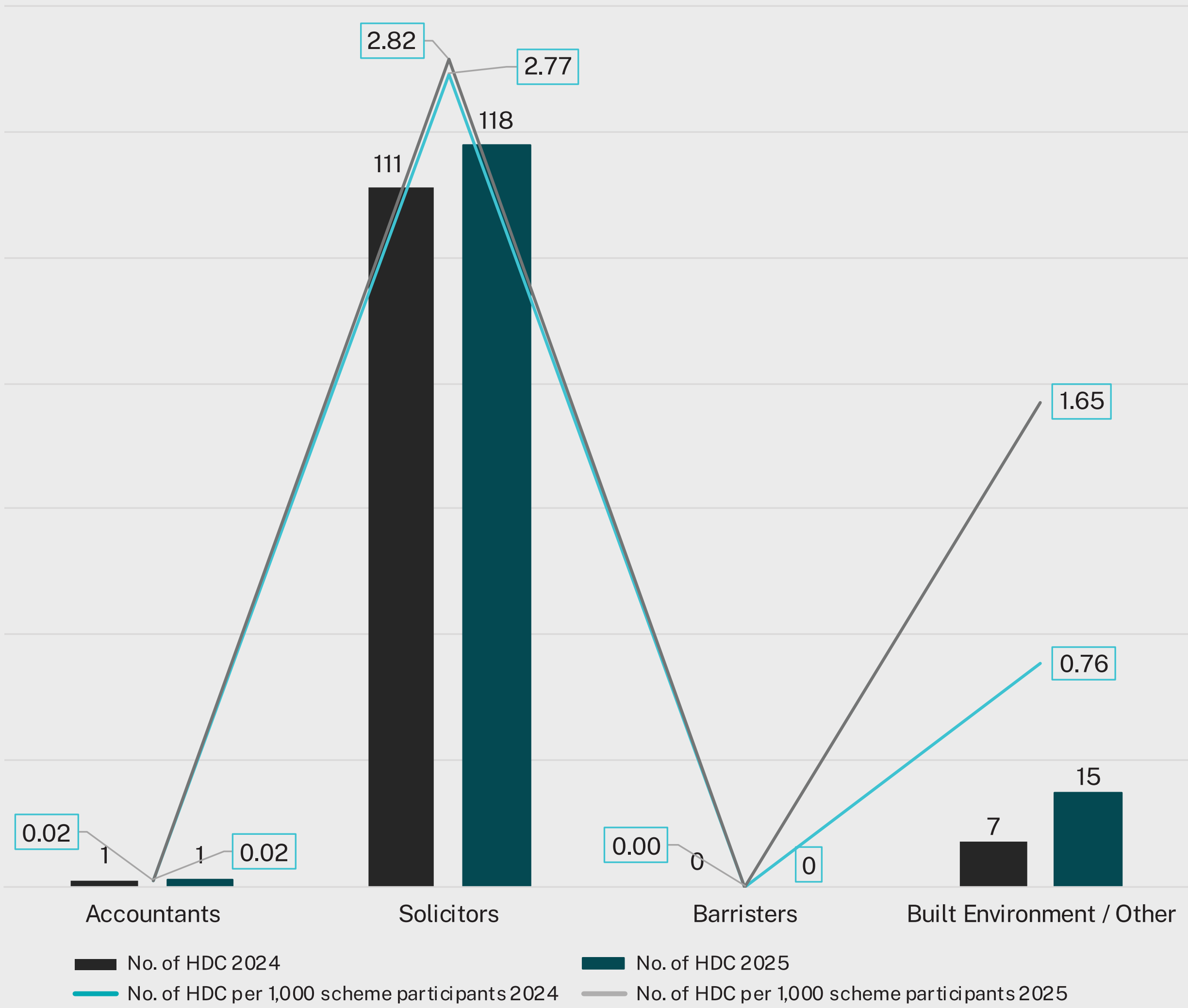


Higher discretionary caps

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 2024 to 2025



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 engaged with eight 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 scheme. They also assist first time applicants to complete their initial scheme application.

The Authority engaged with an additional six 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 requests for further information, 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 by enabling collaboration and knowledge sharing across stakeholder groups, particularly occupational associations.

The Councils hosted a forum on 4 December 2025, providing an opportunity for associations across the national system to explore the key challenges and emerging opportunities presented by artificial intelligence. Topics covered included:

- overview - how AI works
- tool versus service – how people use AI technology
- AI hallucinations
- privacy implications
- ethics of using AI services
- regulation and challenges for professions and associations
- emerging guardrails on AI usage.

Picture: (L-R) Dr Ryan Payne and Councils' Chair John Vines OAM.

Event feedback highlighted that participants appreciated the opportunity to collaborate, discuss shared challenges, and learn from expert speakers. Comments included:

"The forum was a good opportunity to engage with associations outside of the same profession to discuss common issues."

"Dr. Payne was fully informed of the subject matter and provided masses of information about artificial intelligence. I had some knowledge prior to the meeting, but that expanded exponentially[.]"

"Good to meet people from other organisations and the staff."

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

In the last reporting year, the Councils reported engaging Griffith University to undertake qualitative research and develop a report on 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 resulting independent research report, the *Benefits of Professional Standards Schemes*, was published in February 2026. This report is based on the perspectives of five occupational associations with schemes, alongside experts in insurance, law and risk on the benefits of schemes in the five key areas. The report presented the key findings from these perspectives, including:

- professional standards schemes provide an additional layer of support and security to occupational associations' existing standards frameworks
- limitation of liability acts as an incentive to settle claims while reducing the risk of runaway claims and costly and protracted proceedings
- schemes enhance associations' professional standards frameworks by promoting a professional ethos and reputational and other benefits which support ongoing professionalisation
- schemes provide the opportunity to use additional tools to analyse risks and improved training and education to manage risks
- annual reporting, while costly and time-consuming, is beneficial for transparency and maintaining accountability
- improvements in complaints processes and handling, and the opportunity to develop targeted responses to complaints, could improve consumer trust in professions.

The findings show that professional standards schemes continue to play a critical role in lifting standards, reducing risk, and supporting professionals to deliver high quality services.

The report also identifies industrywide challenges, including evolving technologies, regulatory change, and shifting insurance market conditions, and outlines how schemes help associations remain agile and responsive in a complex operating environment.

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. This included reporting on the Councils' ongoing contributions to finalisation and publication of research outputs as a lead partner organisation in the project.

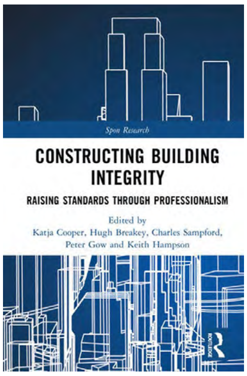
During the reporting period, the Councils continued to work with Griffith University to finalise their contribution to a monograph compiled by Griffith University.

The monograph *Constructing Building Integrity: Raising Standards Through Professionalism* was published in March 2026, as the final academic output of the project.

The monograph includes a collection of separately authored chapters covering key sector professions, ethics, professionalism and regulation. It draws on research and contributions from academics and industry experts to explore how cross-professional interactions, regulation, public accountability, and integrity systems can be strengthened to raise professional standards and improve consumer outcomes.

The Councils contributed to the monograph with a chapter on professionalisation and the role of meta-regulation. The chapter examines how professionalisation, supported by professional standards schemes and metaregulatory oversight, can help lift standards and improve integrity within the building and construction sector.

The Councils promoted the publication through its website and other communication channels. We will report further on distribution of this publication and our engagement activities in the next reporting period.



Picture: The Constructing Building Integrity monograph front cover.

Section 3

Structure and governance

A timeline of our history

1994 New South Wales passes the *Professional Standards Act 1994*, creating the first Professional Standards Council.

1996 The first professional standards schemes are approved for engineers and solicitors.

1997 Western Australia creates its Professional Standards Council.

2002 The Negligence Review Panel, chaired by the Hon. Justice David Ipp, reports to Federal, State and Territory Governments.

2003 Victoria creates its Professional Standards Council.

2004 Queensland, South Australia, Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory create their Professional Standards Councils.

The Commonwealth Government passes legislation to permit it to prescribe schemes to limit civil liability for misleading or deceptive conduct under applicable Commonwealth legislation.

Partner in an Australian Research Council grant to investigate models of regulation and the professionalisation of occupations.

2005 Tasmania creates its Professional Standards Council.

The Professional Standards Agreement 2005 provides common membership of state and territory Professional Standards Councils and the use by each Council of a common secretariat (the Professional Standards Authority).

2006 Commonwealth nominates its first representative to the Professional Standards Councils.

2008 Schemes with mutual recognition in multiple jurisdictions begin to operate.

2011 Schemes are mutually recognised in every mainland state and territory.

All jurisdictions enter into the Professional Standards Agreement 2011 to provide for a national system of professional standards regulation.

2012 The number of members covered by schemes exceeds 50,000.

2014 The Councils are a lead partner in an Australian Research Council grant to investigate professions and professional standards as a model of regulation.

2018 The Councils adopt Strategy 2021.

2020 The Councils are a lead partner in an Australian Research Council grant to investigate the role of professional standards regulation in the built environment sector.

2021 The number of members covered by schemes exceeds 86,000.

Two inaugural schemes approved for occupational groups in the built environment sector.

2022 The Councils adopt *Strategy 2025* and a new Scheme Application Framework.

2026 The number of members covered by schemes exceeds 102,800.

One inaugural scheme approved for an occupational association in the built environment sector.

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 (with some exceptions) 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.

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

Professional Standards Agreement 2011

The *Professional Standards Agreement 2011* is an intergovernmental agreement between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments. It supports a nationally consistent approach to the administration of professional standards schemes, enabling cooperation across jurisdictions and the promotion of high professional standards, risk management and consumer protection throughout Australia.

The Agreement also establishes arrangements for collaboration in the appointment of Council members and the provision of administrative support to the Professional Standards Councils.

The Agreement is implemented through the following two supporting agreements.

Professional Standards Councils and Departmental Procurement of Services Agreement

The *Professional Standards Councils and Departmental Procurement of Services Agreement 2016* is an agreement between state and territory government departments and the Professional Standards Councils. It establishes the arrangements for the provision and procurement of administrative, operational and support services required by the Councils to effectively perform their statutory functions. The Agreement helps to ensure the Councils have access to the resources and services necessary to support the administration of professional standards schemes across Australia.

This agreement expired on 30 June 2026 and was replaced by a renewed Agreement from 1 July 2026 for five years.

Professional Standards Inter-Departmental Service Agreement

The *Professional Standards Inter-Departmental Service Agreement* is an arrangement between state and territory government departments that support the operation of the Professional Standards Councils. Under the Agreement, the NSW Department of Customer Service (DCS), which hosts the Professional Standards Authority, provides a range of administrative, corporate and operational services to the Councils on behalf of the participating jurisdictions. The Agreement promotes the efficient and effective delivery of services required to support the Councils in carrying out their statutory functions.

This agreement expired on 30 June 2026 and was replaced by a renewed Agreement from 1 July 2026 for five years.

Departmental arrangements

The intergovernmental agreements are administered by Professional Standards Officers within the responsible government department in each participating jurisdiction. To support national coordination and consistency in the administration of the professional standards framework, the Professional Standards Authority convenes regular Professional Standards Officer Meetings.

These meetings provide a forum for information sharing, collaboration and the consideration of relevant matters. They also support the effective implementation and ongoing administration of the intergovernmental agreements and professional standards legislation across jurisdictions.

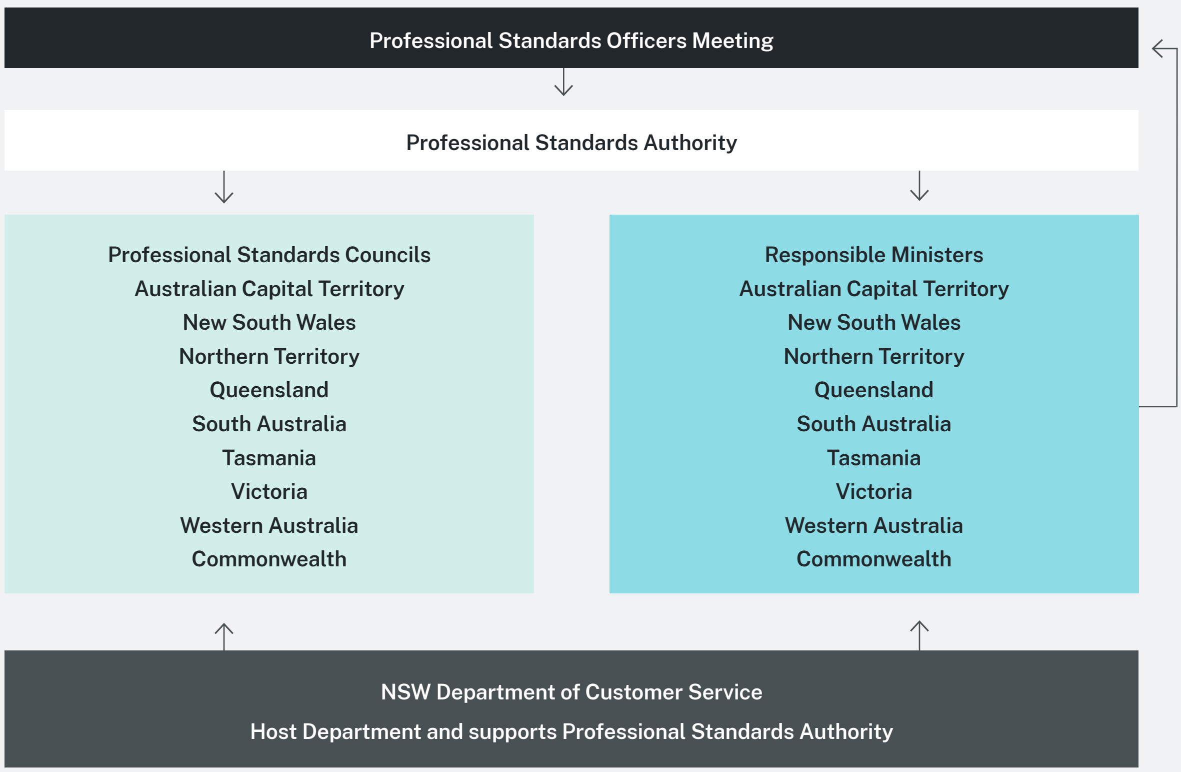
During the reporting period, the Authority worked closely with policy officers and other government representatives across participating jurisdictions on a range of matters, including:

- progressing the renewal of the Professional Standards Inter-Departmental Service Agreement and the Professional Standards Councils and Departmental Procurement of Services Agreement
- assisting responsible Ministers with the notification, gazettal, extension and prescription of professional standards schemes
- supporting Ministers in the nomination, appointment and reappointment of members to the Professional Standards Councils
- coordinating jurisdictional consideration of amendments to fee payments arrangements under NSW and Victorian regulations
- providing advice to Ministers and government departments on proposed amendments to professional standards legislation and related policy matters
- supporting Councils budgeting, jurisdictional audit, compliance and attestation processes
- coordinating the preparation of the combined annual reporting of the Professional Standards Councils.

Figure 10:

Provides a diagram of the national structure

How we work together



Councils' remuneration

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

The below table shows total remuneration for each member for 2025–26.

Table 4:

Remuneration and meeting attendance of council members

Name	Role	Jurisdiction	Total remuneration^*	Meetings eligible to attend	Meetings attended
John Vines	Chair	Vic	$55,808	8	8
Dominic Katter	Member	Qld	$7,556	4	4
Elizabeth Trickett	Member	ACT	$21,722	8	7
Jenni Millbank	Member	NSW	$22,323	8	8
Lisa King	Member	NSW	$22,323	8	7
Pamela Montgomery	Member	Vic	$22,323	8	2
Peter Martin	Member	Cth	$22,323	8	7
Rachel Webber	Member	WA	$22,323	8	8
Ross Springolo	Member	NT	$22,323	8	7
Tiina-liisa Sexton	Member	Tas	$19,155	6	3
Tim Mellor	Member	SA	$22,323	8	7
Elizabeth Shearer (Qld)	Member	Qld	$11,934	3	2
Catherine Wood	Member	ACT	$601**	0	0

^ Includes 12% Super Guarantee Contribution.

*Figures exclude overpayment of $44,174 to one member in first half of FY due to payroll error by DCS. Overpayment has been repaid.

**The term of one Australian Capital Territory nominee, Ms Wood, ended prior to the reporting period on 30 June 2025; the final remuneration payment occurred during the current reporting period.

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 appointed a committee with common membership to constitute the combined Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committees (FARMCs). The FARMCs are responsible for providing oversight and advice on financial management, risk management, budgetary performance, annual reporting, and compliance and risk management.

Members and meetings of the FARMCs

- Ms Tiina-liisa Sexton (Tas) Chair
- Mr Ross Springolo (NT) Deputy Chair
- Mr Peter Martin (Cth)
- Ms Elizabeth Shearer (QLD) (resigned from role as a FARMCs member on 31 December 2025)
- Ms Elizabeth Trickett (ACT) (commenced in role as a FARMCs member on 23 March 2026).

There were three meetings held during the 2025-26 reporting year. Two scheduled committee meetings and one out-of-session meeting. Four circulating resolutions were finalised without a meeting.

Work of the FARMCs

During the reporting period, the FARMCs met to fulfil their governance responsibilities and provide oversight of the Councils’ financial management, risk management and compliance functions.

The FARMCs reviewed financial performance and budget outcomes, monitored risk management and internal control systems, considered audit findings, oversaw annual reporting processes, and reviewed compliance and risk management

Risk management

The Councils are committed to a proactive approach to risk management and to fostering a positive risk culture that recognises both risks and opportunities. Effective risk management is fundamental to achieving the Councils’ strategic objectives and maintaining confidence in their role as trusted and effective regulators.

Risk management principles are embedded throughout the Councils’ strategic planning, statutory decision-making processes and operational activities. The Councils’ Risk Management Plan provides a structured framework for identifying, assessing, monitoring and managing risks across five key domains: statutory, strategic, financial, operational and reputational.

This reporting period, the Councils progressed the development of a new strategic plan to succeed *Strategy 2025*. When consultation is complete and the new Strategic Plan is finalised, the Councils will review and update its Risk Management Framework to ensure continued alignment with future strategic priorities and the evolving risk environment.

The FARMCs continued to provide oversight and advice on the effectiveness of the Councils’ risk management framework. Throughout the year, the FARMCs reviewed key strategic and operational risks, monitored risk management performance, and provided recommendations to support sound governance and informed decision-making. This included consideration of the evaluation of cyber security testing for the Councils’ website.

Financial management

During the reporting period, the FARMCs reviewed the Councils’ budget and annual income and expense statements. The full Councils also received reporting on income and expenditure throughout the year at each scheduled meeting. Through this oversight, the committees provided support to the Councils on the Councils’ financial planning and management.

Internal and external audit and testing

The Professional Standards Councils of Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria are required to prepare annual financial statements that are externally audited. In South Australia, the audited financial statements are subject to optional tabling in Parliament.

As the tabling and audit processes in these jurisdictions are generally finalised following publication of the Councils' combined Annual Report, the audited financial statements are subsequently made available as financial statement addendums on the Councils' website.

Throughout the year, Authority staff worked closely with the relevant jurisdictions and Councils to coordinate scheduled audits, manage audit requirements and fees, and support governance, reporting and tabling obligations.

The NSW Audit Office conducts an engagement reviewing annual revenue and DCS expenses under the intergovernmental agreements.

In addition to external audit requirements, DCS undertakes a range of assurance and compliance activities. These include mandatory cyber security and information assurance requirements, such as website penetration testing, quarterly attestations and other security-related reviews, as well as additional governance and compliance testing where required.

Professional Standards Authority

The Professional Standards Authority is a business unit within the Fair Trading and Regulatory Services Division of DCS.

Authority's organisational structure

The budget approved by the Councils sets the capacity for staffing and operational costs within the Authority. This budget applies revenue from the statutory fees paid under professional standards legislation. The Councils are intended to be funded from statutory fee revenue only.

Figure 11:

Authority organisational structure as at 30 June 2026

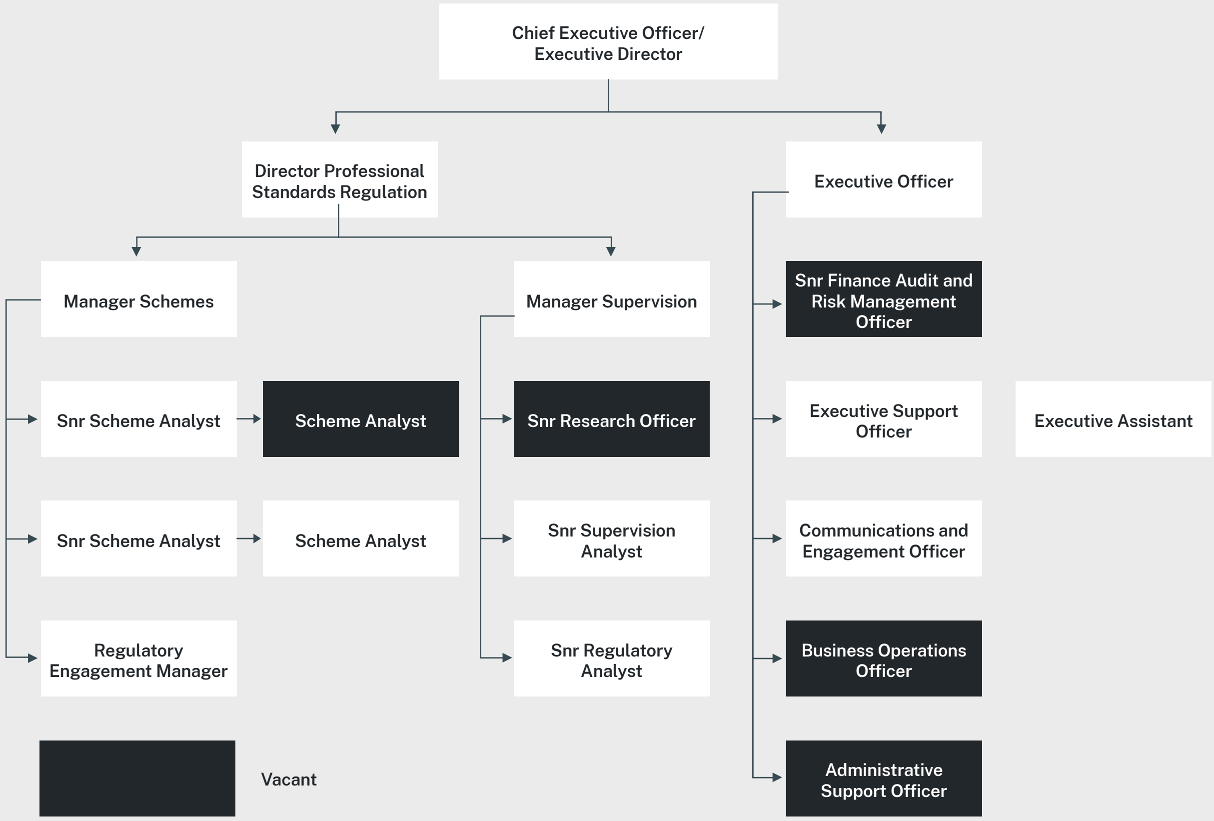


Table 5:

Authority staff profile as at 30 June 2026

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

Authority's senior executive

At 30 June 2026, the Authority had two positions classified as Senior Executive in the NSW Public Service. The Department's remuneration levels for Senior Executives in each band are detailed in the table below. The two positions are included in the DCS workforce statistics. Further details, including reclassified data for inclusion of acting Senior Executives, are provided in the DCS Annual Report available at nsw.gov.au/customer-service.

Table 6:

Senior Executive remuneration in DCS

	Band 1	Band 2
FY2025-26 salary range	$208,400–$297,250	$297,251–$373,950
FY2025-26 average remuneration	*	*
FY2024-25 salary range	$201,350–$287,200	$287,201–$361,300
FY2024-25 average remuneration	$247,823	$332,715

*Average remuneration figures for the current reporting period were not available at the time of publishing and will be reported in the DCS Annual Report 2025-26.

Management and accountability

Management and accountability functions for the Authority occur through broader DCS frameworks.

Given the Authority's small workforce and associated privacy considerations, workforce-related data is not reported separately in this Annual Report. Information relevant to the Authority is incorporated within the DCS Annual Report, which provides information on reporting areas including:

- employment statistics
- governance principles and framework
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW) reporting
- compliance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW)
- risk management framework, implementation and monitoring (including compliance management, business continuity management and fraud and corruption)
- insurance activities (including workers' compensation claims data)
- cyber security policy attestation.

Sustainability

In addition to the abovementioned management and accountability items, sustainability functions for the Authority occur through broader DCS frameworks. The DCS Annual Report contains information on the following sustainability related items:

- climate-related financial disclosures
- *Modern Slavery Act 2018* (NSW) reporting
- work health and safety
- diversity and inclusion at DCS
- diversity and inclusion statistics
- Disability Inclusion Action Plans
- indigenous engagement.

Section 4

Financial performance

Financial statements

The Councils' financial results for 2025-26 are presented here. Financial statements are audited as required in four jurisdictions and our summary of income and expenses 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.

Table 7:

Summary of Income and Expenses[1] for year ended 30 June 2026[2]

Accrued revenue summary:	Total	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Plus: - Bfwd Contract liabilities annual fees from FY24/25	758,708	596,049			162,659		-	-	-
Plus -Total cash FY25/26 annual/ application fees received	5,143,550	3,488,950	477,250	106,700	934,300	136,350	-	-	-
Plus -Total FY25-26 annual fees accrued	35,873	22,323	6,350	1,750	3,750	1,700	-	-	-
Plus -Total interest on overdue annual fees payable	562	489			74	0	-	-	-
Less- Reversal of accrual for annual fees 30 June 2025	(112,217)	(68,446)	(11,900)	(100)	(10,921)	(20,850)	-	-	-
Less - Annual fees contract liabilities (cfwd) to FY26/27	(868,292)	(697,305)			(170,987)				
Total Income (association driven) to be recognised FY25/26	**4,958,184**	**3,342,060**	**471,700**	**108,350**	**918,875**	**117,200**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Income	Combined	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Scheme annual fees[3]	**4,927,622**	3,326,571	466,700	108,350	908,801	117,200			
Scheme application fees[4]	30,000	15,000	5,000	0	10,000	0	-	-	-
Interest on overdue annual fee (from associations)[5]	562	489	0	0	74	0	-	-	-
Sub total association fees	**4,958,184**	**3,342,060**	**471,700**	**108,350**	**918,875**	**117,200**			
Co-occupancy income[6]	46,990	46,990					-	-	-
Interest on funds[7]	250,489	174,329	34,217	0	41,944	0	-	-	-
Investment Admin Fee	(842)		(842)			-	-	-	-
Total income	**5,254,822**	**3,563,379**	**505,075**	**108,350**	**960,818**	**117,200**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Individual Councils % of total income[8]	100.00%	67.81%	9.61%	2.06%	18.28%	2.23%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Expenses									
Employment costs (inc. external non on-going)[9]	2,936,377	1,991,204	282,234	60,546	536,902	65,491	0	0	0
Other operating[10]	1,612,798	1,093,664	155,017	33,255	294,892	35,971	0	0	0
Total expenses	**4,549,175**	**3,084,868**	**437,251**	**93,800**	**831,794**	**101,462**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Total Net	**705,646**	**478,510**	**67,824**	**14,550**	**129,024**	**15,738**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Expenses Attributable to the relevant Councils (GST exclusive):	**4,549,175**	**3,084,868**	**437,251**	**93,800**	**831,794**	**101,462**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Invoiced for Quarter 1 (Jul 25 to Sep 25)	1,049,851	926,307	7,627	502	108,060	7,355	-	-	-
Invoiced for Quarter 2 (Oct 25 to Dec 25)	1,206,776	561,480	257,470	57,999	264,308	65,519	-	-	-
Tracking to be Invoiced for Quarter 3 (Jan 26 to Mar 26)	1,133,207	840,830	49,256	10,468	219,810	12,843	-	-	-
Quarter 4 (Apr 26 to Jun 26)	**1,159,341**	**756,251**	**122,898**	**24,831**	**239,617**	**15,745**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Summary of Income and Expenses for year ended 30 June 2026 Notes

Note 1: This 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: Income received, net of GST from the (NSW) Greyhound Welfare Integrity Commission for co-occupancy of level 2, 111 Elizabeth Street, Sydney. This FY co-occupancy arrangement ended Dec 25. Changed to occupancy lease agreement (OLA) Jan 26, GWIC invoiced by DCS, and now off-set against Occupancy expense in Other operating

Note 7: Interest income is recognised on an accruals basis, as it is earned and is shown gross of bank charges and fees. Bank charges are recognised as an expense on an accruals basis, as the related services are received.

Note 8: 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 9: 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 10: 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).

Table 8:

Detailed expenditure 2025–26

Detailed expenses[11]	Combined	NSW	QLD	SA	VIC	WA	ACT	NT	TAS
Employment expenses									
Employees	2,655,938	1,801,034	255,279	54,763	485,625	59,236	0	0	0
Contractors external	280,439	190,170	26,955	5,782	51,277	6,255	0	0	0
Total employment expenses	**2,936,377**	**1,991,204**	**282,234**	**60,546**	**536,902**	**65,491**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Other operating expenses									
Occupancy[12]	615,937	417,676	59,202	12,700	112,621	13,737	0	0	0
Computer Related Expenses	66,969	45,412	6,437	1,381	12,245	1,494	0	0	0
Fees and Charges[13]	189,138	128,257	18,179	3,900	34,583	4,218	0	0	0
Board Members Fees (exc Sup, PRT)[14]	243,785	165,315	23,432	5,027	44,575	5,437	0	0	0
Insurance	17,083	11,584	1,642	352	3,123	381	0	0	0
Audit Fees[15]	75,840	51,428	7,289	1,564	13,867	1,691	0	0	0
Consulting[16]	106,800	72,423	10,265	2,202	19,528	2,382	0	0	0
Maintenance	2,201	1,492	212	45	402	49	0	0	0
Postage & Telephones	292	198	28	6	53	7	0	0	0
Printing & Stationery	2,651	1,797	255	55	485	59	0	0	0
Training & Staff Development	2,020	1,370	194	42	369	45	0	0	0
Travel & Motor Vehicles	48,984	33,217	4,708	1,010	8,957	1,093	0	0	0
Misc Operating Expenses[17]	69,746	47,296	6,704	1,438	12,753	1,556	0	0	0
Other Operating Expenses	2,350	1,594	226	48	430	52	0	0	0
Depreciation[18]	3,721	2,523	358	77	680	83	0	0	0
Passthrough Costs[19]	165,283	112,081	15,886	3,408	30,221	3,686	0	0	0
Total other operating expenses	**1,612,798**	**1,093,664**	**155,017**	**33,255**	**294,892**	**35,971**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Strategy implementation									
Total expenses	**4,549,175**	**3,084,868**	**437,251**	**93,800**	**831,794**	**101,462**	**0**	**0**	**0**
% expenditure recharged / rechargeable	100.00%	67.81%	9.61%	2.06%	18.28%	2.23%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Note 11: Individual costs are subject to rounding to the nearest dollar.
Note 12: Includes payments for occupancy of premises (Level 2, 111 Elizabeth Street Sydney), security, electricity, maintenance.
Note 13: Includes actuary advice, annual report design services.
Note 14: Paid to Council Members at rates set out in the Public Service Commission 'NSW Government Boards and Committees Remuneration'.
Note 15: Includes costs associated with audit/reviews of all relevant jurisdictions, adjustments to the cost of the publication of the combined FY25/26 Annual Report.
Note 16: Includes advice on scheme renewals, AAC proposed scheme and strategy initiatives.
Note 17: Includes engagement forum, website hosting, publication and advertising expenses.
Note 18: Includes the annual depreciation/amortisation charges determined by NSW Department of Customer Service to recoup prior years capital expenditure.
Note 19: Includes software and hardware, information systems expenses, CRM, telephone, network, service desk expenses.

Section 5

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

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2025–26.

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 47-48.

Public interest disclosure

There were no public interest disclosures for the 2025–26 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. As at 30 June 2026, the Council had received no requests under the Act.

Organisation and function

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 11-13. Please refer to page 49 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 requirements. 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 nature, type 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 49 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 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 52 for the Professional Standards Council of the Australian Capital Territory's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

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 53).

Per the Inter-Departmental Service Agreement, all expenditure is processed by DCS and allocated proportionately to the eight national Professional Standards Councils in accordance with revenue generated in each jurisdiction. No revenue is generated in the ACT and no expenses are apportioned to the ACT Council.

Five contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with three contracts above $25,000 (GST exclusive). All three contracts were with Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, each for $25,900 (GST exclusive).

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 16 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 53.

New South Wales

Constitution of the Council

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Legislative changes

There were no legislative changes affecting the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales.

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 2025–26 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 DCS business units) to respond to requests for information, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosing the information.

The Council is part of DCS for the purposes of the GIPA Act. Applications made under the GIPA Act relating to the Council are centrally coordinated within DCS. The DCS Annual Report 2025–26 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 2025-26 reporting year, the following schemes were publicly notified under section 8 of the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW):

- The Association of Australian Certifiers Professional Standards Scheme
- The Australian Institute of Building Surveyors Professional Standards Scheme
- The Surveyors Australia Professional Standards Scheme
- The Strata Community Association (NSW) Limited Professional Standards Scheme

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

- Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited 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 2025–26 no grants were awarded.

Consultants

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was $72,423 (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.

Five 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 16 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 53.

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 47-48.

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 administering the collection of revenue and operating within budget.

Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 52 for the Professional Standards Council of New South Wales' revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

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 outlined in the DCS Annual Report 2025-26.

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 (DIAP)

The Professional Standards Council of New South Wales and the Authority are committed to creating an inclusive and supportive working environment for people with disability. Information on the DCS DIAP is provided in the DCS Annual Report.

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' 2025–26 Annual Report and the individual financial addendums was $6,412.00. These costs will be recognised in the 2026–27 period.

Northern Territory

Constitution of the Council

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 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 2025–26.

Public interest disclosure

There were no public interest disclosures for the 2025–26 reporting period.

Staff development

The Council is committed to developing the employees who support their work. The Authority's 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 11-13.

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 49 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 52 for the Professional Standards Council of the Northern Territory's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

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

4 September 2026

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 2025–2026 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 page 59 of this Annual Report.

Yours sincerely

John Vines OAM

Chair, Professional Standards Council of Queensland

Constitution of the Council

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Organisational structure

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 11-13.

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 49 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 2025–26.

Risk management

The risk management and internal audit practices of the Council are described on pages 47-48.

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 $10,265 (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. Five contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year. For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 16 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 53.

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 52 for the Professional Standards Council of Queensland's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

Ministerial directives

No Ministerial directives were received during the reporting period.

South Australia

Constitution of the Council

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2025–26.

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 2026.

Organisation and functions

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 11-13. Please refer to page 49 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). 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 $2,202 (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.

Five contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with four contracts above $10,000:

- The Orchard Talent Group Pty Ltd for recruitment services, $19,000 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, $25,900 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, $25,900 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, $25,900 (GST exclusive).

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 16 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 53.

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 2026', tabled at a later date. Please refer to the Summary of Income and Expenses on page 52 for the Professional Standards Council of South Australia's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

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

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

No major changes were made to professional standards legislation during 2025–26.

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 52 for the Professional Standards Council of Tasmania's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

Victoria

Constitution of the Council

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Major legislative changes

There were no major legislative changes affecting the Professional Standards Council of Victoria. The Professional Standards Regulations 2017 (Vic) were updated, which made changes to the annual fee payment regime.

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.

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 2025–26, 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 49 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 52 for the Professional Standards Council of Victoria's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

Consultants

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was $19,528 (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.

Five contracts were awarded to consultants during the financial year, with four contracts above $10,000:

- The Orchard Talent Group Pty Ltd for recruitment services, $19,000 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, $25,900 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, $25,900 (GST exclusive)
- Taylor Fry Pty Ltd for actuarial advice on a scheme application, $25,900 (GST exclusive).

For further details of consultancy spend, refer to Note 16 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 53.

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 P*ublic 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 2026

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 2026.

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

The financial statements comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

John Vines OAM
Chair

Rachel Webber
Member

Organisational structure

For information regarding Council members and their profiles, please refer to pages 11-13.

Mission

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

Authority staff profile

Please refer to page 49 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 2025–26.

Shared responsibilities with other agencies

Please refer to the section on Intergovernmental Agreements and the Authority on pages 44-45.

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 52 for the Professional Standards Council of Western Australia's revenue and expenses for 2025–26.

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 2025–26, 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 2025–26.

Staff development

The Council is committed to supporting the development of employees of its service provider. 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 primary challenges related to operational delivery were lower than optimal staffing levels and recruitment to fill vacancies. However, no statutory functions were affected. Recruitment activities continue to progress to improve staffing levels and operational capacity.

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

Please refer to Table 4 on page 46 for a summary of meeting attendance.

Board and committee remuneration

Please refer to page 46 for a summary of the remuneration for each board and committee member. The Council is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive working environment.

Consultant expenditure

The Council's share of the combined annual spend on consultancy was $2,382 (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.

Five 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 16 of the detailed expenditure in Table 8 on page 53.

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 2025–26 was $591.00, see Table 9 below. This expenditure was on notifying professional standards schemes in newspapers as required under professional standards legislation. Expenditure was incurred in the following areas:

Table 9:

Expenditure on advertising, market research, polling and direct mail

Expenditure	Organisation	Amount	Total
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	Optimum Media Direction PTY Ltd	$591.00	$591.00
Total			$591.00

*The expenditure shown is the Western Australia Professional Standards Council's share (2.23%) of the consolidated pool of annual expenses shared by all eight Councils, which is based on each individual Council's 2025–26 revenue compared to total 2025–26 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 targets[1]

	Total					Results against target
Measure	**2021–22**	**2022–23**	**2023–24**	**2024–25**	**2025-26**	**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:						
(i) within 13 weeks	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%
(ii) within 26 weeks	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Greater than or equal to 80%
Percentage of managers trained in occupational safety, health and injury management responsibilities					N / A	Greater than or equal to 80%

Note 1: Data includes the Council members.

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	*Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (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

AAC	Association of Australian Certifiers
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

Index of Figures and Tables

Figures

Tables

Photographs

Professional Standards Councils

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This document is available online in PDF. Published in September 2026 by the Professional Standards Councils.

Acknowledgement

This annual report would not have been possible without the effort and support of many people in the Authority and the internal DCS design service listed below. Their dedication and flexibility is greatly appreciated.

Concept, design and typesetting

NSW Spatial Services

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COUNCILS

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