Professional Standards Councils *Strategic Plan 2026-29*

Strategic priority	Strategic initiative	Outputs and outcomes
1. Improve Councils support to occupational associations administering approved professional standards schemes.	A. Enhance guidance to support occupational associations in developing, implementing and continual review of the effectiveness of risk management strategies (potentially including model, tailorable frameworks). ***Priority 1, 2, 3, 4.***	Additional support and materials which contribute to improved complaint management systems, disciplinary processes, risk identification/analysis/management tools, **leading to** more relevant and effective risk management strategies directed at identified risks and higher professional standards and expanded /improved consumer protection.
2. Improve Councils oversight of occupational associations administering approved professional standards schemes.	B. Increase the Councils' engagement with occupational associations, and engagement between associations, to build capacity and identify emerging risks. ***Priority 1, 2, 3.***	• New three-year engagement plans with individual occupational associations • enhanced Councils forums for occupational associations, and • refreshed website including practical tools for occupational associations, **leading to:** • enhanced engagement between the Councils and occupational associations • greater collaboration on risk identification, risk management and systems between occupational associations • enhanced risk management capacity of, and consumer protection by, occupational associations.
	C. Improve the analytical tools of the Councils to better focus on risk, including risks specific to occupational associations, sectors and jurisdictions. ***Priority 1, 2, 3.***	A suite of tools to enable association-based assessment of applications and reporting, **leading to** risk identification and management strategies tailored to specific, rather than generic, risks of harm to consumers.
	D. Investigate options for enhanced monitoring of occupational associations with approved professional standards schemes. ***Priority 2, 4.***	A comprehensive analysis of potential regulatory changes, including available options for monitoring and verification under the legislation, **leading to** more targeted verification of association annual reporting, risk management systems and compliance.
3. Consider expansion of professional standards schemes to occupational associations in sectors which could particularly benefit from enhancing professionalism.	E. Engage with government and regulators to articulate the benefits of professional standards schemes. ***Priority 3, 4.***	Ongoing engagement with Ministers, peer regulators, occupational associations and interested stakeholders, **leading to** identification of industry sectors and occupational associations which could most benefit from enhancing professional standards and consumer protection.
	F. Investigate options for facilitating the participation of multi-disciplinary occupational associations in the national system of professional standards regulation. ***Priority 3.***	Pathways for occupational associations representing more than one occupational group to operate approved professional standards schemes, **leading to** expanded scope of consumer protections and higher professional standards across industry sectors.

	G. Engage with the insurance industry to identify sectors which demonstrate increased consumer risk through rising professional indemnity insurance costs or low insurance rates. ***Priority 1, 2, 3, 4.***	More systemic engagement with insurers, brokers, occupational associations and others, **leading to** identification of and expansion into sectors which would most benefit from the consumer protections and higher standards of professional standards schemes.
4. Promote better understanding of the role of the national system of professional standards regulation, including its meta-regulatory framework and role in complementing other government regulatory systems.	H. Refresh the Councils website to more clearly and accessibly explain • the purpose and regulatory context of the national framework; • the benefits and requirements of professional standards schemes; • the statutory powers and limitations of the Councils under the relevant legislation and regulations; • how the national framework complements other systems of regulation. ***Priority 1, 2, 3, 4.***	Redesigned Councils website which is easier to navigate, provides clear but detailed information, and is accessible to all interested stakeholders, **leading to** improved understanding of the national framework for all stakeholders.
	I. Develop and publish a statement of principles for setting statutory limitations of liability applicable to professional standards schemes. ***Priority 3, 4.***	Guidance explaining the importance of limitations of liability and the approach of the Councils in determining them under the legislation, **leading to** more transparency and better understanding of key regulatory decisions.
	J. Deliver forums for occupational associations with approved professional standards schemes, occupational associations considering applying for a scheme, and key stakeholders with an interest in the work of the Councils. ***Priority 1, 3, 4.***	Regular forums on addressing practical challenges facing occupational associations, emerging risks and issues, and relevant regulatory and policy developments, **leading to** information sharing, collaboration, improved understanding and better regulatory practices of occupational associations, and better informed stakeholders.
	K. Enhanced engagement with stakeholders including occupational associations, regulators, policy agencies, brokers and underwriters, Governments, academics, consumer groups and consumers on the professional standards regulatory framework. ***Priority 1, 2, 3, 4.***	Stakeholder engagement plan identifying, and outlining our approach to engaging with, key stakeholders, **leading to** better understanding of the role and benefits of professional standards schemes, potential opportunities for the expansion of schemes, and identification of other opportunities for improvement (such as improvement in information exchange with insurers, policy development, guidance, regulatory methods or potential legislative reform).