



Application Module 6.0 – Annual Professional Standards Report capacity and capability

A. TO BEGIN THE MODULE

1. This module sets out the annual compliance reporting information under the Professional Standards Legislation that is compulsory for an association with an approved Professional Standards Scheme to complete and submit to the Professional Standards Councils by 31 March each year.
2. The relevant section of the legislation (using the *Professional Standards Act 1994* (NSW) as an example) is section 37, which requires an occupational association to provide the following:
 - (a) information to the Council concerning its risk management strategies, if requested to do so
 - (b) an annual report to the Council as to the implementation and monitoring of its risk management strategies, the effect of those strategies and any changes made or proposed to be made to them.

In Tasmania, if requested by the Minister, the annual report must also be provided to the Minister. In Tas, the ACT, NT, Vic, Qld and SA, an association's annual report must include details of any findings made, or conclusions drawn, by a committee established under the applicable section of the Professional Standards Legislation dealing with the monitoring of claims made against an association's members.

3. The annual compliance report is included in the Council's Annual Report to the Minister, which is laid before most Parliaments. The form of the annual compliance report is prescribed by the Council. It is called the Associations Professional Standards Report, typically abbreviated as APSR (and previously termed the Professional Standards Improvement Plan, or PSIP).
4. The module should be read in conjunction with Guidance 6.0.1 *Annual Professional Standards Report* and Guidance 4.0.2 *Professional risk management strategies*. These documents aim to assist you to complete the module.
5. Completion of this module involves participation in a workshop facilitated by the Authority, as set out in section C of this module. You need your governing body to review and approve the information that is provided at the workshop.
6. The workshop will reinforce your understanding of your association's ongoing compliance and reporting obligations, should its Scheme be approved. The material that you present in response to Module 6.0 will form the starting point for workshop discussion.

B. WHAT IS ANNUAL REPORTING IN THE CONTEXT OF A PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS SCHEME?

7. The Association Professional Standards Report must be submitted by the association on or before 31 March of each year. It informs the Councils of the association's implementation of its professional risk management strategies, including consumer protection and improved occupational standards, and its compliance with the Professional Standards Legislation, over the previous calendar year (or, where a Scheme commenced



operation during the previous calendar year, the report will cover the relevant part of the previous calendar year).

8. Your annual report to the Councils is submitted electronically, using a template. Guidance 6.0.1 *Annual Professional Standards Report* provides the framework on which the template is based.
9. The report has five parts:
 - a. *Highlights*: the biggest achievement of the association in occupational standards.
 - b. *Informing Consumers*: how consumers are informed about the Scheme.
 - c. *Protecting Consumers*: how consumers are protected by the Scheme through standards.
 - d. *Redress for Consumers*: how consumers are provided with redress.
 - e. *Scheme Administration*: how the Scheme is administered, and other relevant details.

C. COMPLETING THE MODULE

10. During the Scheme application process, in completing the various modules and submodules, associations demonstrate their capability and capacity to manage a Scheme and submit the report when it falls due.
11. If your Scheme is approved, you will be asked to attend a post-application workshop with the Authority. Participation in this workshop is part of completing Module 6.0 *Annual Professional Standards Report*. The workshop formally transitions your engagement with the Authority's Scheme Applications team to the Scheme Supervision team. The workshop outlines your association's ongoing compliance and annual reporting requirements.
12. The headings below will be agenda items for the workshop, and the descriptive paragraphs provide examples of the matters to be discussed. To prepare for the workshop, you need to be able to provide information as follows:
 - o Governance: What are the governance arrangements for the preparation and approval of the Annual Professional Standards Report? Include the role of governing-body delegated, and member-based, Committees, and the review and approval of the report by the governing-body.
 - o Standards: Describe the process of initiation, monitoring, enforcement and review of occupational standards, and provide evidence of continuous improvement with a review cycle of standards, and your prioritised list of standards to be reviewed and approved.
 - o Feedback: Describe the process for incorporating feedback provided by the Councils (and the Authority) to improve your association's professional risk management strategies.
 - o Administration: Provide the name and contact details of the contact person for the preparation of the report on behalf of your association, and any additional internal and external resources that will be at this person's disposal.
 - o Data management: Describe the arrangements for the collection, analysis, and synthesis of information from members and other data sources, over the course of the year (including a description of your IT systems) in order to prepare the report.
 - o Compliance: Provide a relevant excerpt from your compliance plan, demonstrating clear visibility and monitoring of the date for submitting the report, following the review and approval by your association's governing body, on or before 31 March each year.
13. After considering the template outline for the report found in Guidance 6.0.1 *Annual Professional Standards Report*, advise the Authority of any elements of reporting which



your association would be unable to provide, or may only be able to provide with a significant investment of time and other resources (including HR, financial and IT).

D. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

14. Guidance 4.0.2 *Professional risk management strategies* provides additional information relevant to completion of your association's Annual Professional Standards Report.

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