

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, albeit very briefly, on the above.

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) is very aware of the various, and unfortunately inconsistent, criminal checking systems across States and Territories. As an organisation heavily involved in “working” with children and youth, we do not apologise to current or prospective participants, or our younger members’ parents/guardians, about our policies with respect to mandatory police and/or working with children checks, depending on the relevant State/ Territory government laws. Our primary concern is the safety and well-being of the 100,000 + children and youth directly in our care and the millions of youngsters who we look after at Australia’s largest and most popular playground – our beaches.

Consequently, SLSA is supportive of the proposed amendments to Part VIIC of the Crimes Act 1914, as outlined in the Explanatory Memorandum. The amendments, in our view are both reasonable and sensible, and hopefully will eventually lead to national consistency and help streamline and quicken the administrative processes.

I would be very happy to expand on the policies and processes we have in SLSA to ensure we minimise the risks of allowing inappropriate persons into positions which may involve children or youth. SLSA is very aware that criminal checks are only one small element of an overall child protection/welfare strategy.

I trust these succinct comments are useful.

Regards

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