



Octopus Conference 2021

Policy responses in the Pacific area to protect children from OCSEA

Australia's policy responses

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Threat of child sexual abuse



Australia is the **third largest consumer** of livestreamed child sexual abuse after the US and UK



Production and distribution of child sexual abuse material has an estimated value today of **between US\$3 billion and US\$20 billion**



>\$9 billion lifetime financial costs of child abuse and neglect in Australia **annually**



94% of child sexual abuse material found online by the Internet Watch Foundation contains images of children **aged 13 or under**

191 people were charged with **more than 1,800** federal child sexual abuse offences in 2020.



134 children were removed from harm in 2019-20.



220 child-like sex dolls seized by Australian Border Force in the 2020 calendar year





Australia's legislative framework

Commonwealth *Criminal Code Act 1995* and *Customs Act 1901*

- Child sexual abuse offences using a **carriage service** (such as the **internet**) and **postal service**, including:
 - Possessing, sharing, producing and procuring child abuse material
 - Grooming and procuring a child for sexual activity
 - Live-streaming of child abuse
- **Overseas** child sex offences by Australian citizens or residents, including:
 - Engaging in sexual intercourse / activity with a child
 - Child abuse material offences
- The **importation and exportation of child abuse material**, including:
 - Bringing child abuse material into Australia, for example on a mobile phone, computer or other device and importing a child-like sex doll.



Legislative reforms



2017

Passports Legislation Amendment (Overseas Travel by Child Sex Offenders) Act 2017

- Introduced world-leading measures to prevent Australian child sex offenders from travelling overseas without permission.



2019

Combatting Child Sexual Exploitation Legislation Amendment Act 2019


- a new offence of possessing a child-like sex dolls
- a new offence for possessing child abuse material obtained or accessed via the internet or other carriage service
- strengthening offences for the overseas sexual abuse of a child and forced marriage
- Replaced all reference to “child pornography material” with “child abuse material”



2020

Crimes Legislation Amendment (Sexual Crimes Against Children and Community Protection Measures) Act 2020

- a new offence for creating or administering a website, chatroom or other electronic service for child abuse material
- new offences for the online grooming of third parties (e.g. parents)
- new aggravated offences for child sexual abuse involving cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, or that causes death of a child
- increased maximum penalties for child sexual abuse offences and mandatory minimum penalties for the most serious offences and repeat child sex offenders.



National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse

- In October 2021, the Australian Government launched Australia's first *National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse (2021-2030)*. The National Strategy will provide a coordinated, nationally consistent approach to preventing and better responding to child sexual abuse in all settings.
- Key measures include:
 - Implementing a National Victim Identification Framework, bringing together state and territory law enforcement agencies into a national victim identification capability.
 - Creating programs that stop people before they offend and that reduce repeat offending, including launching an offender prevention service for adults who have sexual thoughts about children or young people.
 - Developing options to improve civil remedies for victims of Commonwealth child sexual abuse offences.
 - Strengthening financial intelligence efforts to disrupt cash-flow behind child sexual abuse.

International Engagement

- Recognising that child abuse is a borderless crime, the National Strategy also includes a number of initiatives to address OCSEA internationally.
 - Working with digital industry to improve efforts in combatting online child abuse, including in relation to live-streaming of abuse.
 - Launching a capacity building program working with partners in the Indo-Pacific on regional policy, legislative and operational responses to online child abuse.

