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People are NOT for sale

## Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans

<b>4.2 Safeguarding Policy</b>			
<b>Approved and Issued by National Committee</b>	<b>October 2020</b>	<b>Version No</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Scheduled Review Date</b>	<b>May 2022</b>	<b>Previous Review Date</b>	<b>May 2021</b>

### **The National Committee continues to develop this Safeguarding Policy.**

ACRATH's Safeguarding policy is to be read alongside the CRA's (Catholic Religious Australia) *Model Safeguarding Policy for Religious Institutes* as issued from time to time.

#### **Safeguarding Statement of Commitment**

ACRATH creates an environment of safety, empathy and inclusion. The care and well-being of children and adults at risk are at the core of all ACRATH's activities.

Everyone has inherent dignity and ACRATH respects the right of each one to have this dignity valued and protected.

ACRATH members, staff and volunteers:

- commit to establishing right relationships, restorative justice and promoting a safe and positive environment for children, adults at risk, and with one another.
- acknowledge the lifelong trauma of abuse victims, survivors and their families.
- acknowledge the resilience and strength of survivors as they seek paths of justice and healing.
- unreservedly express sorrow for the pain, suffering, hurt and harm that people have suffered through abuse and any subsequent failure of Church leaders and others to respond appropriately to that abuse.
- ACRATH Inc. fully complies and cooperates with the civil law in each jurisdiction where members, staff and volunteers work.
- ACRATH Inc. has zero tolerance of abuse.

### **Introduction**

ACRATH is an association of members, incorporated as an Association in the State of Victoria, who are volunteers and are committed to working to eliminate trafficking in humans in Australia and overseas. It is an Australian Registered Charity with a network that spans across Australia in cities, regional centres and remote Australia. It was founded by a small group of religious sisters in 2005 and is endorsed by Catholic Religious Australia – the peak body for over 150 religious orders in Australia, representing over 5,700 religious sisters, brothers and priests.

It has connections overseas through Talitha Kum, the International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in Persons, part of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). ACRATH has a small number of staff and volunteers who work for the National Office under the direction of the National Executive Officer.

### **Purpose**

ACRATH is committed to working together with other organisations and individuals towards the elimination of human trafficking and the harm it causes in Australia, the Asia Pacific region, and globally.

### **Values**

Dignity of each human being

Human Rights

Women's Rights

Justice

Collaboration

### **Context**

Australia is a destination country for trafficked persons. Some people are coerced or tricked into coming into Australia with promises of safe work or are coerced into unsafe relationships. Other people are seeking to migrate to improve their lives and the socio-economic status of their families. As Australia opens up to free trade markets with weakened worker protections in their home countries, the demand for cheap labour, products and services will continue to intensify. This will contribute to an environment where slavery, slavery-like practices, human trafficking, debt bondage, and exploitation in many industries can flourish.

### **Scope**

This Safeguarding Policy applies to all members, staff, volunteers and contractors engaged with ACRATH.

### **Implementation and Responsibilities**

The National Committee of ACRATH has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all aspects of safeguarding, particularly of children, young people and adults at risk are effectively addressed and practised.

Day to day implementation of ACRATH Safeguarding Policy and practice is delegated to the National Executive Officer and Regional Co-ordinators.

ACRATH adopts and acts in accord with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) as issued and modified from time to time by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) and as ongoing through development by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd. (See Appendix A)

ACRATH's practices are consistent with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the State and Territories legislation.

### **Commitment to safeguarding practices**

Every member, volunteer, staff member and contractor working for ACRATH is familiarised with the NCSS, this policy, and ACRATH's Code of Practice, and is expected to comply with the principles and practices that are outlined.

All members, volunteers and staff are required to hold the relevant Working with Children and Vulnerable Persons Checks according to the legislation of the local jurisdiction.

Records for the relevant Working with Children and Vulnerable Persons Checks are held at the National Office of ACRATH and are kept current by the National Executive Officer. (see Policy 2.11 Working With Children Checks)

### **Response to Complaints**

The National Committee, through the President or a delegate, will respond to a person who presents a complaint about abuse with transparency, sensitivity and compassion. A person making a complaint will be made aware of the options available to such people, including the fact that the matter may be referred to the police by ACRATH if it is believed that a crime has been committed.

Any member who receives a complaint is required to refer it to the National President or named delegate who will follow the ACRATH policy in this regard. The complaints process and contact details are published on the ACRATH website.

### **Pastoral Support**

The National Committee through its delegate may arrange with the person making the complaint, appropriate pastoral and counselling support if this is accepted by the person. It will be made clear that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if a criminal act has been involved.

### **Record Keeping**

The National Committee is committed to keeping accurate confidential records of all complaints received, in a manner that respects the applicable Privacy Regulation, for a period not less than 50 years. (See 3.2 Records Management and Archives Policy)

If/when ACRATH ceases to exist, every effort will be made to ensure the preservation of the archival material under agreement with another entity of the Catholic Church.

### **Professional Compliance**

ACRATH members, volunteers and staff and contractors will comply with the relevant professional codes of practice which apply to their professions as well as follow ACRATH's Code of Conduct.

Regular training will be conducted for members, volunteers, and staff to familiarise them with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, this policy and Code of Conduct that relate to their ministry and work and to the obligations of ACRATH.

### **Communication**

The National Committee will ensure that:

Guidelines for relating to the media are developed, implemented and reviewed according to the schedule for policy updates.

Guidelines will include procedures for accurate and timely information should an issue of complaint become public.

### **Conclusion**

ACRATH's Statement of Commitment is published on its website and other appropriate publications.

### **Review**

The Safeguarding Policy and related documentation will be reviewed annually or earlier as required.