

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**Australian Government****Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet****SECRETARY****DR MARTIN PARKINSON AC PSM**

Ref: EC17-000202

Dear Secretaries

As you may be aware, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse released its report into Working With Children Checks on 17 August 2015. The Report can be found at <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/about-us/our-reports>

Most of the recommendations for the Commonwealth relate to it taking on a leadership role, working with states and territories as they hold responsibility for children's policy. However, recommendation 3c seeks action from all Commonwealth Public Service leaders. It reads:

...the Commonwealth Government should, within 12 months of the publication of this report... identify and require all Commonwealth Government personnel, including contractors, undertaking child-related work, as defined by the child-related work standards set out in this report to obtain Working with Children Checks.

I am working to ensure this in my Department and portfolio bodies and ask you to do the same. Particular consideration should be given to employees that may have intermittent contact with children because of their work but may not fall directly under the child related work standards as set out in the Report.

While this work is essential, it is important to acknowledge that Working With Children Checks are only a small part of making sure that children are safe from harm. As employers, we must be aware of our obligation to encourage a child safe culture and to ensure that our organisations have child safe policies that are implemented and accessible to all employees.

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A written update on your Department and portfolio bodies' progress towards meeting the Royal Commission's recommendation along with an outline of your child safe policies would be appreciated by 30 June 2017.

The contact in my Department for children's policy is Ms Ailsa Borwick, Assistant Secretary, Social Services and Immigration Branch who can be contacted on 6271 5079 or at ailsa.borwick@pmc.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M L', written in a cursive style.

2 March 2017

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