

Corporate plan 2026–27

For the period 2026–27 to 2029–30

Australian Communications and Media Authority

eSafety Commissioner

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Corporate plan 2026–27

For the period 2026–27 to 2029–30

Part 1

Australian Communications and Media Authority

Part 2

eSafety Commissioner



Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Communications and Media Authority
and the eSafety Commissioner acknowledge First Nations peoples
as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Australia.

We respect and celebrate First Nations peoples
as the original storytellers and content creators of the lands
on which we work, and honour the enduring strength
and commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
to the land, waters and their communities.
We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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Introduction

Statement of preparation

I, Nerida O’Loughlin, as the accountable authority of the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), present the Corporate plan 2026–27 of the ACMA and the eSafety Commissioner (eSafety), which covers the period 2026–27 to 2029–30, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).



Nerida O’Loughlin PSM

Chair and Agency Head
27 July 2026

About this corporate plan

The ACMA is a non-corporate Commonwealth entity under the PGPA Act,¹ as a listed entity established under subsection 6 of the *Australian Communications and Media Authority Act 2005* (ACMA Act). For the purposes of the PGPA Act, the eSafety Commissioner is not a Commonwealth entity; the relevant Commonwealth entity relating to the eSafety Commissioner is the ACMA. Section 170 of the *Online Safety Act 2021* provides that the eSafety Commissioner is an official of the ACMA for the purposes of the finance law.²

Our corporate plan includes an introduction, our purposes, key activities and our operating context and performance. The reporting period covers the 4 reporting periods from 2026–27 through to 2029–30, as required under the PGPA Act. The eSafety Commissioner’s corporate plan is presented in Part 2 of the document.

Australian Communications and Media Authority

The ACMA is the independent Commonwealth statutory authority for the regulation of communications and media services in Australia. Our purpose is to contribute to maximising the economic and social benefits of communications infrastructure, content and services for Australia. We do this by maintaining, enforcing and improving regulation to drive industry performance and protect consumers. We manage public resources to enable industry to deliver services to the community. This work underpins our vision: a connected, informed and entertained Australia.

¹ The ACMA is a listed entity for the purposes of finance law under section 6 of the ACMA Act.

² Section 8 of the PGPA Act defines finance law as the PGPA Act, the PGPA rules, any instruments made under the PGPA Act and the relevant appropriation acts.

eSafety Commissioner

The eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) is Australia's independent regulator for online safety. eSafety fosters online safety by exercising powers under Australian Government legislation, primarily the *Online Safety Act 2021*, to protect Australians from serious online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences. eSafety achieves this through regulation, national leadership and coordination, research, and educational and awareness activities that promote online safety. eSafety promotes and coordinates online safety efforts across government departments, authorities and agencies. The eSafety Commissioner is an independent statutory office holder.

Under section 184 of the Online Safety Act, the ACMA provides staff to assist the Commissioner to perform the Commissioner's functions under the Act.

Part 1

Australian Communications and Media Authority

Message from the ACMA Chair



As the accountable authority of the ACMA, I am pleased to present our corporate plan for 2026–27. The eSafety Commissioner's plan is presented in Part 2, reflecting our separate regulatory and operational functions.

Communications and media services are central to Australia's economic and social wellbeing. They connect communities, underpin commercial productivity and innovation, and keep Australians informed and entertained.

In an environment marked by global volatility, rapid technological change, cost-of-living pressures and increasing community reliance on digital services, the ACMA's purpose – to maximise the economic and social benefits of communications infrastructure, content and services for

Australia – remains as relevant as ever.

Australians expect communications and media services to be reliable, accessible and trusted. The ACMA's role is to help meet these expectations through clear and proactive regulatory actions.

In 2026–27, we will maintain a strong focus on reliable and resilient communications infrastructure, executing effective spectrum management, enforcing consumer protections and supporting access to Australian content.

We will contribute to dynamic and sustainable sectors that we regulate by fostering competition and innovation. This will include support for the introduction of new technologies, such as direct-to-device satellite services, that present new opportunities to address the digital divide.

Our role is ever-evolving, as seen through our significantly increased responsibilities in addressing gambling harms. This is an area where community expectations and legislative reforms are reshaping the regulatory landscape and our operational requirements.

To deliver on our purpose, our key activities for the next 4 years will be to:

- support an efficient and reliable communications infrastructure
- build consumer trust in the use of communications content and services.

Achieving clear outcomes for the Australian community requires strong organisational capability. Over the period of this plan the ACMA will continue to invest in our people, systems, data, regulatory intelligence and the partnerships we need to regulate effectively in a fast-moving landscape.

We will also continue to work collaboratively with government, industry, other regulators and consumer groups to inform our work and serve the Australian public.

I look forward to working with my fellow Authority members and the ACMA's staff to implement this corporate plan over the next year and beyond. I will report on our performance against the plan in our Annual Performance Statement in the ACMA's annual report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nerida O'Loughlin', written in a cursive style.

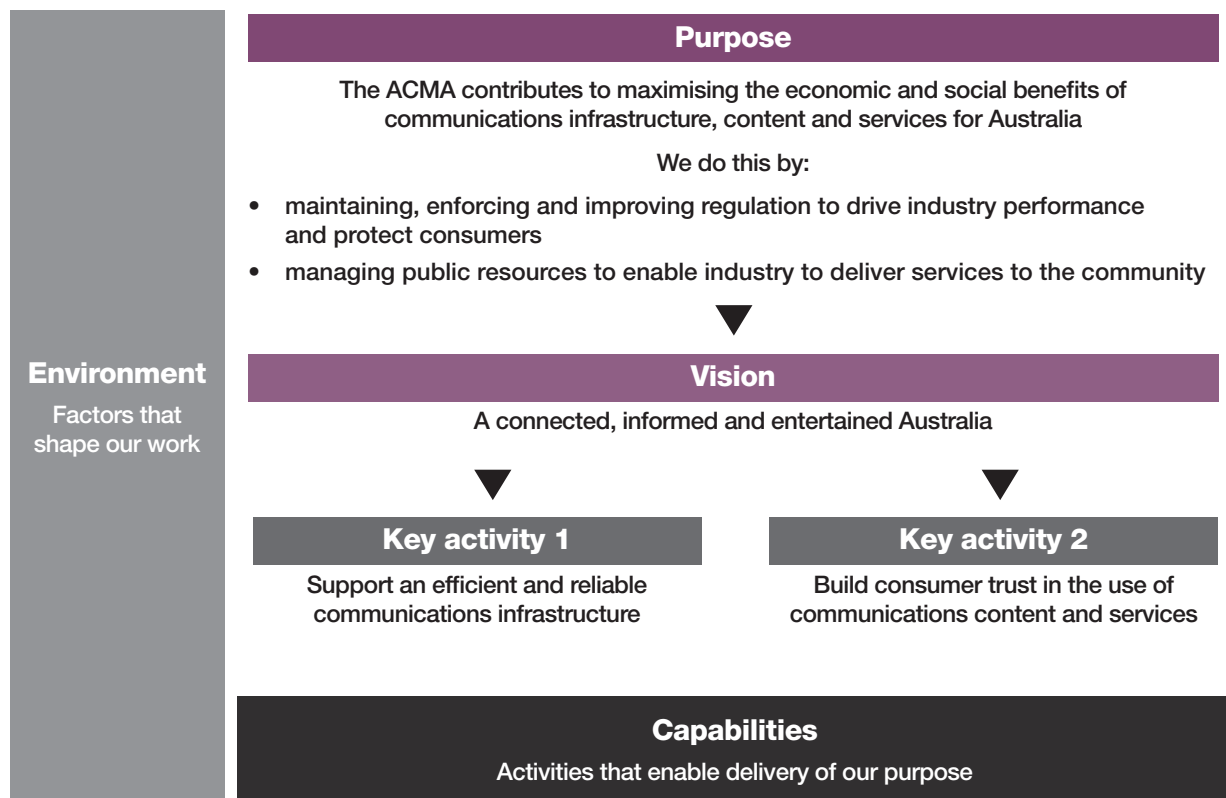
Nerida O'Loughlin PSM
Chair

Our purpose

The ACMA contributes to maximising the economic and social benefits of communications infrastructure, content and services for Australia.

Our 2 key activities enable us to deliver on our purpose over the time of this corporate plan. We also have a vision statement to describe what we want to achieve through our work.

Our performance framework is illustrated below.



Our environment

Australia's communications and media sectors play an essential role in everyday life. They support how people connect with one another, access information, do business and stay safe at home, work and in their communities. These sectors underpin essential services across the economy and government, and are relied on for education, health care and social connection. As the sectoral regulator, we operate in a fast-moving environment shaped by technological change, evolving audience and user expectations, and complex global influences.

Global factors

Australia operates in a complex and dynamic international environment shaped by changing global policy settings, rapid technological change and commercial competition. These factors influence technology development, supply chains and investment certainty, interacting with sustained cost-of-living pressures for Australian households and businesses.

At the same time, globally connected harms, such as scams, unsolicited communications and illegal offshore gambling, are testing domestic regulatory frameworks. These require coordinated national and international responses. Rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) are also reshaping the communications and media environment, with implications for the sectors we regulate and the services they provide.

Communications infrastructure

Australians rely on telecommunications services every day. Almost all Australian adults used a mobile phone in the first half of 2025, and mobile phones are increasingly the main way people access the internet. Data use is also rising across fixed, mobile and satellite services. This growing reliance on connectivity for economic activity and public services is increasing demand around the world for radiofrequency spectrum – the foundation of wireless communications – and underscoring the importance of effective spectrum management.

Spectrum fuelling innovation

Advances in 5G and emerging 6G technologies, along with newer Wi-Fi standards, are enabling a wider range of data-intensive applications. As demand continues to grow, forward planning for future network capacity is becoming increasingly important, particularly in parts of the mid-band spectrum used by both mobile and Wi-Fi services.

In response, we are introducing new arrangements in the upper 6 GHz band and continuing to improve the efficiency of existing spectrum frameworks. This work includes updating licence settings and assignment instructions, exploring spectrum sharing and coordination, and modernising regulatory instruments where this will improve clarity and effectiveness.

Satellites and converging services

Satellite services continue to fill coverage gaps and support specialised applications, such as internet of things (IoT) connectivity, remote industry operations and emergency communications. Direct-to-device (D2D) services using low-Earth-orbit (LEO) constellations show growing potential to improve connectivity in regional and remote Australia.

Satellite D2D services using frequencies allocated for terrestrial mobile networks can operate under existing spectrum licences without additional approvals. We are monitoring the increasing convergence between satellite and terrestrial services, including its implications for consultation on the proposed 2 GHz mobile satellite band. The Australian Government's implementation of the Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation, is likely to incorporate the use of LEO satellite services to deliver baseline outdoor mobile coverage, improve access to Triple Zero and strengthen public safety connectivity in remote, regional and peri-urban areas.

Network complexity and drone management

As satellite and terrestrial networks become more complex, providers are increasingly using AI and machine learning to manage networks and improve service performance. The ACMA continues to monitor how AI is being used across the sectors we regulate. Drone use is also growing across both recreational and commercial activities, increasing demand for reliable communications to support safe operation.

The ACMA has licensing arrangements in place to support commercial and consumer use of drones via class licensing and interim access to the 5055–5065 MHz band. We also provide exemptions that enable law enforcement agencies to use counter-drone devices in limited circumstances to support public safety, and support the responsible development of counter-drone technologies and related industry capability in Australia.

Critical infrastructure

Investment in submarine cables is increasing, reflecting their growing importance to Australia's connectivity. At the same time, new offshore renewable energy protection zones are being established in areas that overlap with existing cable protection arrangements. This creates practical challenges in managing competing uses of the seabed and the interests of cable operators. We are working with other agencies and industry to navigate these overlaps and to address risks to the security and resilience of sub-sea cable infrastructure.

Market conditions and service reliability

Telstra, Optus and TPG Telecom all recorded revenue growth over 2024–25, primarily from their mobile segments. The Australian market faces a range of structural challenges also seen globally, including maintaining investment in networks increasingly used for over-the-top services that are challenging for mobile network operators to monetise. The rollout and monetisation of 5G remains a key priority, and Australian operators have a range of focus areas, including new fibre networks, mobile virtual network operators, asset sales and long-term network sharing deals. Globally and in Australia, telecommunications companies are investing in AI to reduce costs and realise operational efficiencies.

Network outages, natural disasters and the increasing reliance on mobile services for emergency communications have intensified consumer and government expectations for reliable services and customer safety.

The closure of 3G networks in 2024 and recent large-scale outages have heightened expectations that the Triple Zero ecosystem remains reliable, resilient and interoperable. We are reviewing device standards to ensure they remain fit for purpose and are informed by lessons from the 3G network closures, including cases where some compliant 4G devices could not carry calls without access to a 3G network. Consumer safeguards remain central – people expect affordable, reliable services, fair treatment when things go wrong and clear redress pathways.

Scams, privacy and digital threats

Scams continue to pose major financial and emotional harm. Criminal syndicates exploit complex supply chains and use SMS, online and over-the-top channels, and AI-enabled impersonation to deceive consumers. The Scam Protection Framework and the work of the National Anti-Scam Centre will strengthen telco responses to detect, block and prevent scams across telecommunications, banking and digital platform sectors. The Sender ID Register, launched on 1 July 2026, is providing important new protections against impersonation scams and is helping to create a safer communications channel for consumers.

Gambling compliance and harm prevention

The gambling sector's innovations in technology and ways to promote participation continue to create regulatory pressure and new issues of concern, including prediction markets and the prevalence of social media influencers promoting illegal gambling services. At the same time, malicious activities, such as 'scambling', are emerging as areas of consumer harm. The ACMA's engagement with government, licensed wagering operators, and domestic and overseas regulators remains a key aspect of our work to prevent harms.

Media use, sustainability and reform

The market for viewing of, and listening to, content continues to change, with audiences showing a strong preference for online services. ACMA research finds that subscription streaming remains the main way people watch video content and has begun to stabilise. In June 2025, 91% of Australian adults used an online service to watch video content over a 7-day period, unchanged from 2024. Paid subscription streaming services, such as Netflix and Disney+, were used by 68% of adults, while 44% used free-to-air catchup TV and streaming services, also steady compared to the previous year.

Radio listening has stabilised after a long period of decline. In 2025, overall radio listenership held steady for the first time since 2017, with 64% of adults having listened in the previous 7 days, compared to 83% in 2017. While this reflects a sustained long term decline, radio-set ownership increased in 2025, particularly among younger Australians.

Economic pressures and digital competition continue to challenge the sustainability of public interest journalism and media diversity, especially in regional areas. In 2025, the Australian Government released its report on the sustainability of community broadcasting, with recommendations for both industry and government. The government is continuing to implement the News Media Assistance Program, including the Journalism Assistance Fund, which was launched in November 2025 to support the sustainability of Australian news publishers.

The government also consulted on the News Bargaining Incentive in late 2025, with implementation anticipated in 2026. The incentive is intended to ensure large digital platforms contribute to the sustainability of news and journalism in Australia. More broadly, the government's media reform agenda continues to shape the operating environment. New prominence requirements for free-to-air services on connected television devices will begin in 2026, and Australian content requirements on streaming services are now in effect.

Information integrity and digital platforms

Australians increasingly rely on digital platforms for news and information, and many report being exposed to misinformation online. In the first half of 2025, 72% of Australian adults who used a digital platform believed they encountered some form of misinformation.

The ACMA oversees a voluntary industry code aimed at improving transparency in how digital platforms respond to misinformation. The Digital Industry Group administers this code and conducted a review that resulted in changes to both the code and its governance structure. The results of the code review were published in June 2026.

At the same time, the rapid acceleration and uptake of AI is creating new challenges for the integrity of the information environment. We continue to work with other agencies to support the Australian Government's national AI plan and the establishment of the AI Safety Institute.

We also coordinate with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and eSafety Commissioner through the Digital Platform Regulators Forum (DP-REG) on cross-cutting issues related to digital platforms. The forum's forward work program includes a focus on dispute resolution mechanisms.

Inclusion and First Nations outcomes

In support of Closing the Gap Outcome 17, we contribute to improved access to information, including through community broadcasting licensing. In June 2026, the ACMA received applications for 5 long-term community broadcasting licences in remote Western Australia. The applications will be considered in early 2026–27.

In May 2026, as part of our *News media in Australia* series, we published new data on First Nations people employed as journalists. This work aligns with Priority Reform 4 (improving access to data and information) under the Commonwealth Priority Reforms Roadmap: Building APS Readiness for Transformation.

International environment

International spectrum harmonisation, standards and cross-border coordination remain important to effective domestic spectrum management. Australia plays an active role in preparing for the International Telecommunication Union World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 and continues to engage through the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity and other regional forums.

We are also monitoring international developments to examine spectrum bands for potential wireless broadband use. These developments may inform Australia's future spectrum planning and settings.

Our regulatory environment

We support the Australian Government's objectives, including those set out in the Ministerial Statement of Expectations and relevant Ministerial Policy Statements, through our regulatory, planning and licensing activities. The communications and media environment continues to evolve, shaped by government-led reforms, technological change and consumer demand.

A number of regulatory initiatives underway over the life of this corporate plan will influence our operating environment, including the government's introduction of a Universal Outdoor Mobile Obligation to promote baseline outdoor mobile coverage. As some spectrum licences expire, we are also working with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts (DITRDCSA) to explore the merits of place-based licensing arrangements that could make unused spectrum available in regional areas. In addition, we expect to implement or review several co-regulatory codes and other regulatory instruments, and also manage the sunset of a small number of legislative instruments in the 2026–27 period.

Scam activity targeting Australians is driven by sophisticated criminal syndicates that operate on an industrial scale. Consumer losses reported to Scamwatch across all contact channels remain high. Australians reported losses totalling \$2.18 billion in 2025, an increase of 7.8% from 2024, although still less than the high of \$3.1 billion in 2022.³

Scamwatch data also suggests disruption initiatives to prevent phone scams are having an impact. Under these, telcos have reported blocking over 2.8 billion scam calls (from December 2020) and over 1 billion scam SMS (from July 2022) to the end of December 2025. The contact method with the largest reported decrease in losses was phone calls, decreasing by 32% from \$107.2 million in 2024 to \$72.5 million in 2025. Reported text message scams reduced by 62.4%, from 77,365 in 2024 to 29,058 in 2025, although reported losses to text scams rose from \$14 million in 2024 to \$17.9 million in 2025, despite the decrease in reported contacts.

The introduction of the SMS Sender ID register, which commenced on 1 July 2026, is expected to make a further difference in impersonation scams reaching Australians, along with the upcoming implementation of the government's Scam Protection Framework.

The regulatory environment for emergency communications has also evolved. The establishment of the Triple Zero Custodian in 2025 has strengthened system-wide oversight and coordination of the emergency calling ecosystem. Within this framework, we have received additional funding of \$23.4 million over 4 years to strengthen our oversight and compliance activities, and to work closely with the Triple Zero Custodian, industry and emergency service organisations. This work supports the ongoing availability, reliability and resilience of Triple Zero services over the life of this plan.

The Australian Government has announced reforms to both legal and illegal gambling services, including in relation to gambling advertising and in response to the recent statutory review of BetStop – the National Self-Exclusion Register™. These changes will result in a significantly expanded role for the ACMA in both implementation and enhanced monitoring and enforcement.

More broadly, a range of other government-led reforms and reviews may influence our operating environment. These include whole-of-government drone security reforms and the News Bargaining Incentive.

³ Targeting scams: Report of the National Anti-Scam Centre on scams data and activity 2025

Our operating context

The ACMA's regulatory role

Under functions set out in Part 2, Division 2 of the ACMA Act, the ACMA is responsible for regulating broadcasting, radiocommunications, telecommunications and some online content in accordance with 4 principal Acts:

- *Radiocommunications Act 1992*
- *Telecommunications Act 1997*
- *Telecommunications (Consumer Protection and Service Standards) Act 1999*
- *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*.

There are other Acts that confer regulatory jurisdiction on the agency or are relevant to the ACMA, such as the *Spam Act 2003*, the *Do Not Call Register Act 2006* and the *Interactive Gambling Act 2001*. We may also make legislative instruments in areas where primary legislation requires or permits.

eSafety Commissioner

eSafety is Australia's independent regulator for online safety. The ACMA continues to support the Commissioner as an independent statutory office holder. Details about the work of eSafety, including activities and performance, are provided in Part 2 of this corporate plan, the 2026–27 ACMA Portfolio Budget Statement and eSafety's subsequent annual report.

Governance

The ACMA is a statutory authority established by the ACMA Act. The ACMA Chair serves as Agency Head, with powers, functions and accountabilities under the PGPA Act, the *Public Service Act 1999*, the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988*, the *Fair Work Act 2009* and various other pieces of legislation.

The Authority

The Authority is a collegiate, regulatory decision-making body of between 3 and 9 members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair. The Authority also has 2 associate members appointed under cross-appointment arrangements with the ACCC to support collaboration between the sectoral and economic regulators.

The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia appoints the full-time members, and the Minister for Communications appoints the associate members.

On 1 July 2026, the Authority comprised:

- Nerida O'Loughlin (Chair)
- Adam Suckling (Deputy Chair)
- Carolyn Lidgerwood (Full-time Member)
- Samantha Yorke (Full-time Member)
- Anna Brakey (Associate Member)
- Catriona Lowe (Associate Member).

Authority members may lead an area of the ACMA's work and chair internal committees aligned with their relevant skills and expertise. The current internal committees are the:

- Content Committee
- Gambling Committee
- Telecommunications Consumer Committee
- Spectrum Committee.

The Authority is advised, guided and assisted by agency staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*. The Authority may also delegate some decision making to staff. Staff are ultimately accountable through their line managers and general managers to the Chair.

The Code of Conduct for Authority members and associate members sets out the Authority's strategic intent, approach to business, duties and responsibilities, and the culture and values that guide its work. The Authority reviews the code regularly, most recently in 2025.

Audit and Risk Committee

In accordance with section 45 of the PGPA Act, the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) provides independent advice to the Chair on the appropriateness of the ACMA's financial and performance reporting, system of risk oversight and management, and system of internal control. Additionally, the ARC provides a forum for communication between the Chair, senior executives and internal and external auditors of the agency.

Under subsection 17(4) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014, ARC members must not be officials of the ACMA and the majority must not be officials of any Commonwealth entity.

At 1 July 2026, the members were:

- Ian McPhee AO PSM (Committee Chair)
- Mark Ridley (External Member)
- Josephine Schumann (External Member).

The ARC meets at least 5 times each year.

Executive Management Committee

The Executive Management Committee (EMC) consists of the agency's senior leadership team – the Chair (as Agency Head), Deputy Chair and the 5 Senior Executive Service (SES) Band 2 General Managers.

EMC members are responsible for providing the Agency with governance oversight and strategic direction. They support the ACMA Chair to:

- set and communicate strategic priorities
- ensure agency compliance with the PGPA Act and all other whole-of-government governance frameworks
- monitor organisational risks and ensure appropriate mitigation strategies are in place
- allocate and monitor resource allocations to meet current and future priorities
- establish agency-wide policies and procedures
- promote the ACMA's culture and values, the Australian Public Service (APS) values as set out in the *Australian Public Service Act 1999*, and the Secretaries Charter of Leadership Behaviours (DRIVE)
- track progress against the ACMA's corporate plan and performance measures, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement
- monitor regulatory reform, compliance and enforcement actions.

Major project boards

The Enterprise Project Group (EPG) is a sub-committee of the EMC and is chaired by a senior nominee of the ACMA Chair, currently the Deputy Chair. Meeting bi-monthly, the EPG supports the EMC and Chair by prioritising investment in major digital initiatives and providing oversight and assurance to agreed programs of work.

Divisional boards (DB) allow each division to identify and prioritise new digital and data requests. The DBs have oversight of high-priority projects throughout their lifecycles and assess the benefits of these projects to ensure they align with the priorities of each division and the ACMA. They deliver priorities to the EPG for decision and provide an escalation point for project teams to inform and seek advice from the EPG.

In addition to the EPG and the DBs, significant projects, such as major digital and data developments, may have a standalone project board to oversee, guide and govern their work.

Artificial Intelligence Steering Committee

The AI Steering Committee is chaired by Authority Member and Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer, Samantha Yorke, and contains staff representation from all divisions and eSafety. The committee considers all matters relating to the policy, ethics and implementation of AI, approves and prioritises the use of AI and advises the EMC on the strategic application of AI.

Advisory committees

Part 7 of the ACMA Act enables us to establish advisory committees to assist with performing our functions. We have 2 advisory committees that bring together the telecommunications industry, consumer organisations and government:

- Consumer Consultative Forum (CCF) – convened under section 59 of the ACMA Act, the CCF assists the ACMA to perform its functions relating to consumers.
- Numbering Advisory Committee (NAC) – established under section 58 of the ACMA Act, the NAC advises on telephone numbering, including number rights-of-use, number porting and phone scam reduction activities.

Management and staff committees

Our principal body for formal consultation and discussions on workplace relations of national focus or significance is the National Consultative Forum (NCF). The NCF works collaboratively with our employees and their representatives to identify and implement any major workplace changes or updates to relevant policies or procedures. The NCF meets 3 times a year and is chaired by the Chair as Agency Head.

The National Work Health and Safety Committee (NWHSC) provides a consultative forum to consider broad workplace health and safety issues that may need to be addressed at an organisational level. The NWHSC is chaired by the General Manager, Corporate and Research Division and meets on a quarterly basis.

Culture and Values Network

The Culture and Values Network is co-chaired by 2 ACMA senior staff. With members in each office location, the network aims to foster a committed, impartial, accountable, respectful and ethical workplace that embraces diversity and celebrates inclusion.

Our culture and values – including our organisational values of being curious and questioning, collaborative and purposeful – help shape our agency and are embedded in our priorities and activities.

Annual compliance priorities

Each year, the ACMA targets key areas for improved industry compliance. These are known as our annual compliance priorities. The Authority consults on matters of public interest or emerging issues that are negatively affecting the community, including those that cause consumer harm. These priorities guide our efforts to deliver effective compliance outcomes and, where necessary, targeted enforcement action.

In 2026–27, we will focus on:

- SMS Sender ID Register – targeting branded SMS scams
- Triple Zero and public safety requirements – strong and proportionate enforcement
- equipment regulation for mobile phones – extending the ‘dodgy devices’ program
- domestic, sexual and family violence safeguards – enforcing the Domestic, Sexual and Family Violence Standard
- gambling advertising – implementing new law reforms.

We will also continue work that reflects our enduring priorities, which operate alongside our annual priorities and reflect our long-term focus on significant and ongoing harm to the Australian community, including:

- preventing gambling harms – focussing on supporting the work of the National Anti-Scam Centre in combating ‘scambling,’ implementing the Australian Government’s gambling reforms, targeting influencers promoting illegal gambling services and driving improved compliance with Betstop – the National Self-Exclusion Register™
- combating spam and telco scams – cracking down on non-compliance with mobile number fraud rules, disrupting phone scams and addressing serious or systemic issues in relation to spam
- protecting vulnerable telco customers – targeting telco financial hardship safeguards, including detecting and addressing systemic conduct that disproportionately impacts vulnerable consumers.

Risk oversight and management

The ACMA’s Risk Management Framework sets out our approach to risk oversight and management. It informs the agency’s strategic objectives, supports effective decision making and creates a shared understanding of our risks, controls and mitigation plans.

Our framework has been established in accordance with section 16 of the PGPA Act and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014. It is designed to comply with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and align with the international standard AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines.

We continue to build our risk maturity through enhancing our risk management framework and practices, improving overall risk capability, and embedding a positive risk culture.

The key components of our risk oversight include:

- an annual review of the Risk Management Framework to ensure it remains relevant in our continually evolving operating environment
- maintenance and regular review of our strategic, enterprise and divisional risks
- quarterly consideration of strategic risks and biannual consideration of enterprise risks by the EMC to ensure alignment between risk management and our strategic objectives
- advice by the ARC to the Chair on the appropriateness of our risk oversight and management.

Our risk appetite

We foster a work culture that supports identifying risks through business planning processes and risk management-enabled decisions consistent with our risk appetite.

When delivering on our purpose, we engage with risk to ensure our activities as a statutory regulatory authority are fit for purpose and that there is a willingness to pursue innovation in our systems and processes. As a result, our appetite for risk will vary according to the activities being undertaken.

We work towards ensuring all ACMA staff understand both the potential benefits and potential risks before activities start, and that appropriately authorised controls are in place to mitigate and manage those risks.

Our appetite for engaging with opportunity and risks extends to the management of shared risks with other entities to deliver on the government's objectives.

Our risk appetite is outlined below. Internal documentation provides further guidance in developing and applying our risk appetite to the regulatory activities we undertake.

Area	Risk category
Work health and safety	We have a very low appetite for activities that could compromise workforce requirements, including capability, safety and wellbeing.
Systems and infrastructure	We have a low appetite for the loss or degradation of critical ICT infrastructure, applications and services.
Financial	We have no appetite for internal fraud and corruption. We have a very low appetite for non-compliance with accounting standards, government financial management orders and relevant regulatory requirements.
Trust	We have no appetite for behaviour or activities that are unethical, corrupt or illegal. We have a very low appetite for action that may negatively affect stakeholder trust in the ACMA.
Data and information systems	We have a low appetite for compromises of the security of our data and information systems. We have a high appetite to use data and information systems for improved operational efficiency and decision making.
Strategy	We have a high appetite to pursue strategies that contribute to: • maximising the economic and social benefits of communications infrastructure, content and services for Australia • minimising consumer harms through our regulatory activities.
Innovation	We have a high appetite for fostering innovation that contributes to better regulatory outcomes and continual improvement in our systems and processes.

The following table sets out key risks that must be managed to meet the ACMA's functions.

Key risk	How we will manage risk
Reduction in public confidence in the communications and media services we regulate	• Monitoring and researching industry and consumer behaviours to understand trends and developments, and support evidence-based decision making. • Improving regulation, where possible, in response to market changes and emerging harms. • Taking compliance and enforcement actions proportionate to harms caused by non-compliance. • Identifying and actively addressing regulatory gaps and redundancies.
Inability to align resources to support the effective delivery of government priorities and agency objectives	• Strengthen corporate planning processes to enable robust and evidence-based budget setting. • Regular review and adjustment of business priorities to ensure resources are aligned with government priorities. • Enhance workforce capability through proactive planning and strategies that support attraction and retention of employees with the skills required to deliver objectives, while identifying and addressing capability gaps. • Engage proactively with stakeholders to understand and assess resource impacts arising from changes to the agency's regulatory remit.
Loss or degradation of critical ICT infrastructure	• Maintaining cyber security enhancements to meet essential government controls. • Testing and detecting intrusions. • Investing in ICT infrastructure. • Enabling effective disaster recovery capability.
Appropriate levels of staff wellbeing and safety are not maintained	• Regularly reviewing the Work Health and Safety Framework to support staff wellbeing. • Developing training for staff to support wellbeing, such as psychosocial health and stress management. • Tailoring sessions and internal communications to provide tools and resources available to staff, including the Employee Assistance Program.
Security breach impacts ACMA staff or operations	• Increased investment in physical and cyber security ensuring to address changes in our security environment. • Regular scanning of our threat environment to inform our security posture. • Regular testing of action plans and staff training to increase awareness.

Our culture and values

Our culture and values support us to achieve our purpose, now and into the future. They shape how we work with each other and our stakeholders, and how we approach the opportunities and challenges in our environment.

We are committed to the APS values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful, ethical and demonstrating stewardship. We also embrace diversity and celebrate inclusion. These values underpin our role as an independent decision maker, responsible for balancing sometimes competing public interest objectives and informed by a deep knowledge of the sectors we regulate.

Our senior management aligns with the Secretaries' Charter of Leadership Behaviours, which sets out the behaviours secretaries expect of themselves and the Senior Executive Service and want to see in leaders at all levels across the APS.

Complementing the APS values, we have developed ACMA-specific values, which are outlined below. We continue to embed our culture and values in all our priorities and activities.

We are purposeful

Our commitment to delivering tangible and significant benefits to all Australians directs and drives our work. We are committed to maintaining and enhancing our expertise and contribution to the work of the APS. We are outcomes-focused and strive for high performance. We are timely, measured and transparent. We engage with and manage risk, and adapt quickly to changing expectations and priorities by being agile and flexible.

We contribute to a positive and professional workplace that encourages us to do our best work. We appreciate and support each other and take time to recognise, communicate and celebrate our accomplishments.

We are curious and questioning

We look around us and into the future to explore new and innovative ways of addressing ongoing and emerging challenges and to maximise opportunities. We look deeply into issues from the various perspectives of our stakeholders to develop new understandings.

We ask astute questions and interrogate the implications of matters relevant to our work. We gather and analyse data from multiple sources. We value critical thinking and analysis to support rigorous and innovative approaches to our work.

We value and invest in learning and opportunities for professional development. We take innovation, big or small, as being core to our values, and key to our ability to deliver outcomes in the public interest, and enhance our skills. We seek out information and learn from international research and the experiences of other jurisdictions.

We are collaborative

We collaborate within the ACMA and externally with the DITRDCA, other regulators and relevant agencies, and across all levels of government. We engage proactively and creatively with industry and the community and demonstrate a clear understanding of their issues and challenges. In doing so, as with all our work, we maintain the highest levels of integrity.

We articulate and promote the work of the ACMA to maximise awareness of what we do. We seek out and value diverse perspectives and ideas. We are respectful and share knowledge generously.

Diversity and inclusion

We aim to foster and maintain an inclusive culture at the ACMA.

Our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) concluded in July 2025 and we have developed our second Innovate RAP, set to launch in mid-2026. This RAP will help us move from intent to action by embedding reconciliation into our core business, governance and decision making. It will reflect the work of both the ACMA and eSafety, and align with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and its Priority Reforms, especially the need for genuine partnership, shared decision making, and culturally safe, accountable government organisations.

As we approach the end of our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024–26, our focus will be on developing and implementing a new, forward-looking strategy. This new strategy will continue to ensure all employees feel valued and respected, and are able to contribute openly and safely, while strengthening our commitment to building an organisation that is curious, culturally safe and inclusive.

Critical capabilities

We recognise that our skills and expertise as a regulator are fundamental to achieving our purpose. We will continue to develop our most critical capabilities and respond to our changing operational context.

Workforce capability

Supporting our people to deliver the ACMA's purpose remains critical.

Working under the ACMA's Enterprise Agreement 2024–2027, our employment arrangements support workplace flexibility and provide conditions to attract and retain key staff.

We will continue our workforce planning activities to develop a plan that identifies our critical roles and ensures our agency has the right resources and capabilities to deliver its purpose – now and into the future. We will consider current and emerging skills gaps, labour-market trends and the skills required to underpin capability against our developing strategic agenda.

As we respond to changing government and public expectations, our focus remains on strengthening manager capability across the Executive Level cohort, alongside supporting psychosocial safety and staff wellbeing. We will continue to develop the broader core capabilities aligned to the Organisational Capability Framework and embed the Performance and Development Framework by providing clear guidance, resources and targeted training for supervisors and staff at each stage of the performance cycle.

We will keep engaging with whole-of-government initiatives, such as the APS professional streams and entry-level programs, to support developing critical skills, such as regulatory capability, digital and data literacy, and engineering.

Strategic Commissioning Framework

As required by the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework, the ACMA and eSafety have identified administration, program management, data and research, and ICT and digital functions as core work.

In 2026–27, we will continue working to bring this core work in-house. We will focus on reducing outsourcing in these areas by implementing contractor conversion plans that prioritise APS-first options (redeployment, mobility, capability uplift and recruitment), strengthening contract management and decision points, and ensuring structured knowledge transfer to support transition of roles to APS staff over time.

Regulatory capability

Our key regulatory capabilities include understanding, contributing to and implementing broader policy and regulatory frameworks using our full range of regulatory tools and methods. We continue to strengthen our strategic and regulatory capabilities in response to emerging technologies, business models and consumer behaviours and expectations.

Developing and improving our regulatory capability remains a key focus of the ACMA's Organisational Capability Framework. We will continue to evaluate and improve our regulatory capability, including by conducting regulatory maturity model self-assessments. This will help identify capability gaps and plan for future challenges. We will also continue to maximise opportunities to partner with similar agencies and the APS Academy to embed regulatory best practice across our workforce.

Research and data capability

As an evidence-based regulator, our decisions are informed and supported by research.

Our research program provides strategic and regulatory analysis of consumer, market and regulatory developments in the evolving communications, media and online environment. It allows us to examine the effectiveness of regulation and informs regulatory design, as well as advice to government.

We will continue to grow our data capability and maturity in line with our Data Strategy. We will do this by making our data more discoverable, usable and secure, and by prioritising efforts to improve our advanced analytics, including geospatial capabilities. We will continue embedding the appropriate governance structures under our Data Governance Framework to support consistent and effective data management.

We will continue to collaborate across the APS, including with the Data Professional Stream and the Data Champions Network, to align with APS data reforms and outcomes under the Australian Data Strategy. We will assess our data maturity across the data lifecycle using the [Australian Government Data Maturity Assessment Tool](#).

Digital and ICT

We maintain critical business systems to:

- allocate, manage and sell spectrum
- manage spectrum interference
- support our participation in, and development of, international standards
- regulate media diversity.

These systems also provide compliance and enforcement functions for scams, spam, gambling, content and other areas.

We have built a new system to identify SMS senders and better protect Australians from scams. The SMS Sender ID Register launched in July 2026. These join other online systems for consumer and content regulation, designed and built in consultation with stakeholders.

In response to the [AI Plan for the APS 2025](#), we are delivering the assessment, access and governance needed to facilitate the safe and responsible uptake of AI.

As service delivery through online systems becomes business-as-usual, we will continue to evolve our Digital and ICT Strategy 2024–28 to deliver advanced technologies that will help us regulate more efficiently, in line with the Data and Digital Government Strategy.

Our charging environment

We collect revenue on behalf of the Australian Government through broadcasting, radiocommunications and telecommunications taxes, fees and charges.

We operate within the Australian Government Charging Framework for the regulatory activities we cost-recover from industry, including the Annual Carrier Licence Charge, BetStop – the National Self-Exclusion Register™ and the Do Not Call Register. Cost-recovery arrangements are constantly monitored and reviewed annually to ensure they are fit for purpose and adequately reflect the cost of ACMA's activities.

All charges, levies and taxes collected from industry are returned to the government's Consolidated Revenue Fund for future reinvestment into other initiatives.

During the period of this plan, our focus will be on implementing new cost-recovery arrangements, as approved by the government, including for fighting scams, supporting connectivity and continuing to refine the efficiency of cost-attribution processes.

External cooperation and partnerships

In undertaking our regulatory role, we work with government, industry and international colleagues to achieve outcomes that are in the long-term interests of all our stakeholders. This includes the millions of Australians who use and rely on communications and media networks, devices and services, together with the businesses that supply them. Our work also supports defence, security, space, maritime, emergency services, law enforcement and transport sectors in their use of spectrum.

Domestic collaboration

Our domestic relationships include working closely with DITRDCA to progress improvements to the regulatory framework within which we operate. We also collaborate with other state and Australian Government agencies and regulators, industry, industry bodies and consumer advocacy groups to enhance collaboration and deliver better outcomes for Australians.

We work closely with the ACCC and have members cross-appointed to enhance collaboration between agencies. These arrangements help to better serve the interests of our broader stakeholder base and benefit decision making. We also support the ACCC-led National Anti-Scam Centre, including through being a member or observer on committees.

We enter into memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with other government agencies and regulators to facilitate information sharing and collaboration and to promote industry compliance and consumer protection. Details of our MoUs are on our website.

We are one of 4 government regulators, along with the ACCC, eSafety and the OAIC, to form the DP-REG. The DP-REG gives members the opportunity to share information and to collaborate and coordinate on digital platform regulation. The forum also engages with areas across government as part of its work to support the responsible use of AI.

In addition, we work closely with industry, industry bodies and consumer advocacy groups to consult on priorities, work programs and proposed regulatory changes. This includes consulting on our annual five-year spectrum outlook and annual compliance priorities to ensure that our regulatory efforts are strategic, proportionate to the problem at hand and meet the needs of industry, government and the community.

International collaboration

We work closely with international regulators and take part in global forums to help deliver the best results for Australians and the Australian communications industry. By building strong co-operative relationships and partnerships, we can promote and protect Australian interests and support broader government policies and activities.

We have strong relationships with international spectrum regulators, industry and international radiocommunications forums. We continue to participate in the work of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) through leading Australian engagement in ITU Radiocommunication Sector Study Groups and the APT Wireless Group. We are also heavily involved in the DITRDCA-led preparatory activities for ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRC), by providing technical and regulatory expertise and assuming one of the Vice-Chair roles of the APT regional WRC preparatory process.

We are particularly focused on strengthening the relationship and cooperation between Australia and the Indo-Pacific to support broader government policies and activities. Following delivery of our successful Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Training Program (TRTP) in 2024, which was attended by 33 delegates from 14 countries in the region, we continue to undertake additional training and engagement initiatives.

The increasingly global nature of our work – especially in areas such as online gambling laws, scam reduction, captioning quality, media diversity and digital platforms – means we must continue to find new and innovative collaborative approaches with overseas regulators and organisations.

We have MoUs in place with overseas gambling regulators, including the Netherlands Gaming Authority and New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement (NJDGE). We are also a member of the International Association of Gaming Regulators (IAGR), a global forum for gaming regulators to exchange information and discuss policy issues.

We continue to enter into MoUs with international regulators and networks to combat scams, including with the United Kingdom's Office of Communications (Ofcom), the Infocomm Media Development Authority of Singapore, New Zealand's Department of Internal Affairs, Canada's Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), the United States' Federal Communications Commission and the Unsolicited Communications Enforcement Network.

As part of our DP-REG membership, we also participate in the International Network for Digital Regulation Cooperation (INDRC). The INDRC brings together regulators from Australia, the Netherlands, Ireland and the United Kingdom to examine coherence across digital regimes and gather insights into how overseas jurisdictions approach domestic regulatory coherence and cooperation.

The ACMA is a founding member of the Media and Online Regulation Forum (MORF) – a collaboration mechanism between media regulators, including Ireland's Coimisiún na Meán, Ofcom and CRTC. MORF provides a forum for regulators to share knowledge and experiences on content and media regulation.

We also meet with international digital platforms and organisations to stay abreast of important technological developments, particularly as they relate to misinformation and disinformation.

Our performance

Our corporate plan sets out how the ACMA will measure its performance in achieving its purpose through the activities, objectives and performance measures. Performance against these measures is reported through the Annual Performance Statements.

For 2026–27, the ACMA has undertaken targeted refinements to its performance framework to support a more streamlined and focused set of entity-level performance measures. As outlined in the 2026–27 Portfolio Budget Statements, the ACMA's performance measures were under review, with refined measures presented in this corporate plan. The updated performance framework maintains coverage of the ACMA's key regulatory responsibilities, while improving the clarity and usefulness of entity-level performance reporting.

These refinements form part of the ACMA's ongoing approach to strengthening its performance framework to ensure it continues to support clear, meaningful and transparent reporting on our performance over time.

Our assessment methodology

The ACMA's performance measurement framework is a key component of the agency's annual performance measurement and reporting, in accordance with the Commonwealth Performance Framework. It allows us to report on the outcomes we achieve and our effectiveness in achieving our purpose. It encompasses:

- **key activities** – the significant areas of work that we undertake to achieve our purpose
- **performance objectives** – the high-level organisational strategies that underpin our vision and purpose and inform our planning and performance
- **performance measures** – how we will assess our success in delivering our key activities, consistent with our performance objectives and, ultimately, our purpose
- **methodologies and data** – the sources of information and approach we use to monitor our progress and assess performance against the measures.

Our performance measures have a target for 2026–27 and targets for the 3 forward years covered by this plan.

To assess our performance, we will measure our results against the associated target and assessment criteria, and report them as met, partially met or not met in our Annual Performance Statement.

The description, rationale and method for assessing each performance measure is listed in the section 'Our detailed performance measures'.

Alignment with regulator best practice principles

The ACMA's regulatory approach reflects the Australian Government's expectations, as set out in the Regulator Performance Guide (RMG 128), for regulators to operate in a transparent, risk-based and proportionate manner. Our performance framework incorporates these best-practice principles to support effective, evidence-informed and outcomes-focused regulation across ACMA's regulatory activities.

Continuous improvement and building trust

Regulators are expected to take a whole-of-system perspective, continually strengthening their performance, capability and culture to build trust and confidence in Australia's regulatory settings.

In line with this, we regularly review and refine our regulatory frameworks to keep them fit for purpose, transparent and responsive to industry and community needs. Our efforts centre on providing greater compliance certainty and strengthening confidence in our regulatory decisions.

We apply this principle by:

- maintaining the high availability of our critical services (for example, BetStop – The National Self-Exclusion Register™) to promote reliability and public confidence
- undertaking licensing, permit activities and investigations within statutory or target timeframes to support trust and consistency
- monitoring our performance to drive improvements in service delivery and regulatory practice
- supporting confidence in access to critical communications services by monitoring compliance with Emergency Call Service answering time performance requirements.

Risk-based and data-driven

Regulators are expected to manage risks proportionately, uphold essential safeguards and minimise regulatory burden, while using data and digital technologies to support stakeholders to comply and grow.

Consistent with this, we apply a proportionate and evidence-based approach to regulation, prioritising areas of greatest harm or potential impact. We draw on data and digital tools to strengthen compliance, guide decision-making and deliver efficient regulatory services.

We apply this principle by:

- regulating equipment to appropriately mitigate risks to networks and to the safety of users and workers
- using risk-based assessments to inform compliance activities across content, services and infrastructure
- using consumer survey data to understand how Australians access and rely on communications services
- leveraging data and technology to guide our regulatory focus and support efficient, targeted interventions.

Collaboration and engagement

Regulators are expected to communicate transparently and responsively, implementing regulation in collaborative and consultative manner.

In line with this, the ACMA engages closely with industry, government and the community to ensure our regulatory outcomes are practical, timely and well informed. We focus on building shared understanding, supporting compliance and contributing to strong domestic and international regulatory frameworks.

We apply this principle by:

- consulting with users, industry and government to help shape our spectrum management decisions
- informing international engagement strategies through consultation with industry and government
- using collaborative approaches in enforcement actions to support improved compliance outcomes.

Key activity 1: Support an efficient and reliable communications infrastructure

We manage Australia's Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan and the Telecommunications Numbering Plan to make spectrum and numbers available for existing and new communications services. Our spectrum allocation decisions support the rollout of new communications technologies, bringing benefits to Australians using communications services. Our licensing, authorisations, rulemaking, and compliance and enforcement activities underpin reliable communications networks. The efficient management of numbering allows telecommunications providers to supply services to new customers and promote competition.

Key activity 1: Support an efficient and reliable communications infrastructure	
Performance objective 1: The ACMA's spectrum planning, allocation and licensing activity meets the needs of the communications industry	
Performance measure 1.1	The spectrum management work program is informed by the ACMA's consultation with spectrum users, industry and government
Performance measure 1.2	The ACMA's communications infrastructure compliance activities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm
Performance measure 1.3	Major spectrum allocations are held effectively
Performance objective 2: The ACMA's contribution to the international spectrum framework supports the needs of the Australian communications industry	
Performance measure 2.1	Australia's international engagement strategies are informed by the ACMA's consultation with industry and government
Performance objective 3: The ACMA's activities contribute to telecommunications infrastructure providers having confidence that they are appropriately authorised and enabled to provide communication services	
Performance measure 3.1	Telecommunications carrier licensing and submarine cable permit activities meet statutory requirements
Performance measure 3.2	Equipment regulation appropriately mitigates the risk of harm to communications networks and people using or working on those networks

Key activity 2: Build consumer trust in the use of communications content and services

We do this by:

- regulating the telecommunications, broadcasting and online gambling sectors by checking they follow rules set in legislation, industry codes and standards, and licences
- conducting research, performance analysis and reporting relating to these sectors and services, including complaints, compliance and service standards
- issuing and managing broadcast content licences and community broadcasting licences
- investigating regulated entities and, if necessary, taking compliance and enforcement actions
- administering the contract for BetStop – the National Self-Exclusion Register™ (NSER).

Key activity 2: Build consumer trust in the use of communications content and services

Performance objective 4: The ACMA's activities contribute to Australians having confidence in telecommunications, broadcasting and online gambling content and services

Performance measure 4.1	Australians' usage of communications services
Performance measure 4.2	The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year
Performance measure 4.3	Compliance with Emergency Call Service answering time performance requirements supporting timely access to Triple Zero is maintained
Performance measure 4.4	Investigations undertaken are completed within the target timeframes

Performance objective 5: The ACMA's regulatory activities contribute to Australians having access to diverse media content and services

Performance measure 5.1	Community broadcasting licence renewal decisions are made within the statutory timeframes
Performance measure 5.2	Media control notifications and captioning order applications are processed within statutory timeframes
Performance measure 5.3	Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received

Our detailed performance measures

Key activity 1: Support efficient and reliable communications infrastructure

Performance objective 1: The ACMA's spectrum planning, allocation and licensing activity meets the needs of the communications industry

The ACMA is responsible for managing the radio frequency spectrum in accordance with the Radiocommunications Act. Our spectrum management activities include:

- maintaining the Australian Radiofrequency Spectrum Plan, consistent with ITU Radio Regulations
- developing and maintaining spectrum band and channel plans
- authorising the use of spectrum by issuing spectrum and apparatus licences (including developing licence conditions), and developing and maintaining class licences
- monitoring compliance with spectrum management regulations by enforcing licensing rules and investigating interference and, where required, taking enforcement action.

Performance measure 1.1: The spectrum management work program is informed by the ACMA's consultation with spectrum users, industry and government

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Stakeholder consultation milestones achieved and progress reports published	Stakeholder consultation milestones achieved and progress reports published	Stakeholder consultation milestones achieved and progress reports published	Stakeholder consultation milestones achieved and progress reports published
Description Our plans to manage spectrum are published yearly in the five-year spectrum outlook (FYSO), which includes our annual work program. A draft FYSO is developed by subject matter experts who monitor domestic and international technology and market trends to identify drivers for spectrum demand. The draft FYSO is published on the ACMA website and spectrum users are invited to comment on the draft FYSO and annual work program. We also publish a response to submissions and a 6-month and annual progress report.			
Rationale Consultation with users, industry and government enables us to balance competing needs and gather valuable information on spectrum usage trends and future requirements. It helps us plan, allocate and licence spectrum to support efficient and reliable communications infrastructure.			
Method We will undertake a qualitative assessment. This will include reviewing internal records that document our consultation with users, industry and government to develop the spectrum management work program and assess whether the program was informed by the views and issues raised.			
Type of measure: Output			
Data/information sources: Published FYSO, consultation submissions received, responses to submissions and progress reports, plus internal program documentation			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.1 Communications regulation, planning and licensing			
Regulator performance principle: Collaboration and engagement			

Performance measure 1.2: The ACMA's communications infrastructure compliance activities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Compliance priorities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm	Compliance priorities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm	Compliance priorities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm	Compliance priorities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm
Description Communications infrastructure compliance activities include our efforts to deliver effective compliance and, where necessary, targeted enforcement. These actions contribute to ensuring that licensees operate within the relevant rules and interference is effectively managed.			
Rationale Our annual compliance priorities are designed to be targeted, proportionate and responsive to regulatory needs. This approach strengthens the effectiveness of compliance strategies, directs resources to areas of significant concern, and bolsters public confidence in our regulatory processes.			
Method We will identify bid proposals and project plans relevant to each compliance priority and qualitatively assess whether each priority has been informed by a risk-based assessment of harm. This includes potential and actual risks of harm relevant to the compliance issue.			
Type of measure: Output			
Data/information sources: Annual compliance priorities, investigation plans and documentation, and internal business and project plans			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.1 Communications regulation, planning and licensing			
Regulator performance principle: Risk based and data driven			

Performance measure 1.3: Major spectrum allocations are held effectively			
2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Policy objectives and timeframes achieved	Policy objectives and timeframes achieved	Policy objectives and timeframes achieved	Policy objectives and timeframes achieved
Description We are responsible for allocating spectrum to users. We use a range of spectrum allocation processes to promote the long-term public interest, balancing the needs of different users and uses. We may use auctions where demand exceeds supply, and we may renew, partially renew, or refuse to renew expiring spectrum licences in the 2-year window before their expiry. The approach used for a specific allocation will depend on a range of factors, such as the characteristics of the spectrum, anticipated demand, technology and market developments and relevant policy and legal frameworks.			
Rationale Spectrum is a valuable economic resource that we manage to promote the long-term public interest derived from its use. The measure considers whether major spectrum allocation activities meet industry demand, align with policy objectives and are conducted within required timeframes.			
Method We will qualitatively assess whether each allocation achieved the object of the Radiocommunications Act and the communications policy objectives of the government, and whether it was delivered within the FYSO timeframes. Both need to be achieved for this measure to be met.			
Type of measure: Effectiveness			
Data/information sources: End project reports and FYSO progress reports			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.1: Communications regulation, planning and licensing			
Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust			

Performance objective 2: The ACMA's contribution to the international spectrum framework supports the needs of the Australian communications industry

The ACMA is responsible for leading Australia's engagement in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) Study Groups, Working Parties and Task Groups, Australian Radiocommunications Study Groups (ARSGs), and the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity Wireless Group (AWG) and preparatory meetings. We also provide expert technical and regulatory advice to DITRDCSA.

We participate in these forums to support Australian Government policy and ensure that the outcomes maximise the social and economic benefits of domestic spectrum use.

Performance measure 2.1: Australia's international engagement strategies are informed by the ACMA's consultation with industry and government			
2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Australian positions are informed by consultation	Australian positions are informed by consultation	Australian positions are informed by consultation	Australian positions are informed by consultation
Description ARSGs provide expert advice to assist in our development of Australian positions and contributions to the above-mentioned international forums. Membership includes representatives from major telecommunications providers, broadcasters, international and national satellite providers, and various government departments and agencies, as well as amateur radio, satellite, maritime and radio-astronomy experts.			
Rationale This measure provides a long-term qualitative assessment on whether our contribution to the international spectrum framework: • is informed by consultation with industry and government to ensure that domestic interests are considered • supports Australia's interests.			
Method We will assess whether consultation undertaken through ARSGs was consistent with the guidelines. If the consultation was inconsistent, we will determine if the complexity of the matter warranted the approach used. Our assessment will be supplemented by examining our management of the domestic preparatory process for ITU-R Study Group meetings. We will qualitatively assess whether the ITU-R meeting outcomes reflect the preparatory process undertaken in attending and briefing ITU-R Study Group meetings.			
Type of measure: Output			
Data/information sources: ARSG meeting documentation and guidelines, and internal documentation			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.1: Communications regulation, planning and licensing			
Regulator performance principle: Collaboration and engagement			

Performance objective 3: The ACMA's activities contribute to telecommunications infrastructure providers having confidence that they are appropriately authorised and enabled to provide communication services

The ACMA is responsible for regulating telecommunications carrier licensees and submarine cable permit holders under the Telecommunications Act. This includes assessing, granting or refusing applications for carrier licences, nominated carrier declarations and submarine cable permits within set timeframes.

The ACMA also regulates telecommunications, radiocommunications and electrical and electronic equipment under the Telecommunications Act and Radiocommunications Act. Under this role, we make legislative instruments (ACMA mandatory technical standards and labelling notices) that impose obligations on suppliers at the point of supply to the Australian market.

Performance measure 3.1: Telecommunications carrier licensing and submarine cable permit activities meet statutory requirements

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
100% of licensing and permit decisions meet statutory requirements	100% of licensing and permit decisions meet statutory requirements	100% of licensing and permit decisions meet statutory requirements	100% of licensing and permit decisions meet statutory requirements
Description The ACMA is responsible for ensuring that licences for telecommunications carriers and permits for submarine cabling meet statutory requirements. For telecommunications carrier licences, this includes consulting with relevant agencies on applications and administering application fees, notices of surrender and notices of cancellations. We also maintain an electronic register of carrier licences and nominated carrier declarations. We assess and grant or refuse applications for submarine cable installation permits.			
Rationale This measure provides a long-term qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of our telecommunications carrier licensing and submarine cable permit activities. It assesses the extent to which we meet statutory requirements in our decision-making.			
Method We will qualitatively assess whether statutory requirements for telecommunications carrier licences and submarine cable permits have been met in our licensing and permit decisions. The statutory requirements relate to: • licence and permit applications • licensed carrier formal warnings or remedial directions • cancellation of carrier licences • the electronic register of carrier licences and nominated carrier declarations • revoking nominated carrier declarations • permit extension applications • suspensions and cancellations of permits.			
Type of measure: Effectiveness			
Data/information sources: Internal decision-making packages and related carrier licence records			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.1: Communications regulation, planning and licensing			
Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust			

Performance measure 3.2: Equipment regulation appropriately mitigates the risk of harm to communications networks and people using or working on those networks

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Regulatory requirements met	Regulatory requirements met	Regulatory requirements met	Regulatory requirements met
Description The ACMA regulates the supply of certain telecommunications, radiocommunications and electrical and electronic equipment under the Telecommunications Act and Radiocommunications Act, and makes legislative instruments (ACMA mandatory technical standards and labelling notices) that impose obligations on suppliers at the point of supply to the Australian market, including: • meeting applicable technical standards • record-keeping • correctly labelling equipment with the regulatory compliance mark. Maintaining appropriate and effective ACMA mandatory technical standards contributes to telecommunications infrastructure providers having confidence that they are appropriately authorised and enabled to provide communications services.			
Rationale This measure provides a long-term qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of our equipment regulation activities to appropriately mitigate the risk of harm to communications networks and people using or working on those networks.			
Method We will undertake a qualitative assessment of our equipment regulation reform program and its continued impact to establish whether equipment regulation appropriately mitigates the risk of harm to networks and people using or working on those networks. This will include equipment regulation reports being actioned in accordance with our regulatory functions and the reform program demonstrates: • equipment regulation appropriately reflects Australian safety standards • existing instruments are reviewed with industry, including electrical safety regulators in states and territories being consulted about any proposed changes.			
Type of measure: Effectiveness			
Data/information sources: Consultation packages, internal documentation and legislative instruments			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.1: Communications regulation, planning and licensing			
Regulator performance principle: Risk based and data driven			

Key activity 2: Build consumer trust in the use of communications content and services

The ACMA's activities contribute to Australian consumers having confidence in the communications services, broadcasting content and other regulated media available to them.

Performance objective 4: The ACMA's activities contribute to Australians having confidence in telecommunications, broadcasting and online content and services.

We do this by:

- regulating the telecommunications, broadcasting and online gambling sectors by checking they follow rules set in legislation, industry codes and standards, and licences
- conducting research, performance analysis and reporting relating to these sectors and services, including complaints, compliance and service standards
- monitoring compliance with Emergency Call Service performance requirements to support timely access to Triple Zero
- investigating regulated entities and, if necessary, taking compliance and enforcement actions
- administering the contract for BetStop – the National Self-Exclusion Register™.

Performance measure 4.1: Australians' usage of communications services			
2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
95% of Australian adults are connected	95% of Australian adults are connected	95% of Australian adults are connected	95% of Australian adults are connected
Description Our Annual Consumer Survey tracks changes in the ways Australians engage with media and communications services and the experiences that consumers have with the services available to them. This measure supports our purpose by providing insights into Australian consumers' access to and use of communication services, particularly through the internet and mobile devices. It focuses on the proportion of adults who are digitally connected. We use data-driven research and analysis to assess progress toward the ACMA's vision of a connected, informed and entertained Australia. The 95% benchmark reflects the expectation that the vast majority of Australian adults are connected through regular use of communication services, indicating strong access and uptake across the population. The survey process is outsourced to a research consultancy.			
Rationale This measure contributes to the overall performance objective through research and analysis that informs our understanding of how consumers access and use communications services. Measuring access and usage is a proxy for the effectiveness of ACMA activities in supporting widespread access, connectivity and consumer confidence in content and services.			
Method Two independent indicators each need to reach 95% to achieve the target. Collectively, they are proxies that relate to connection – the proportion of Australian adults who accessed the internet in the past 6 months and the proportion of Australian adults who used a mobile phone for communication in the past 6 months. We will agree on the survey processes and procedures with the research consultant each year, including the sample size, error rates, weighting methods and sample quality. For all Annual Consumer Surveys, the sample is representative of Australian adults and a probability-based panel research design is required.			
Type of measure: Effectiveness (proxy)			
Data/information sources: Annual consumer survey data			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information			
Regulator performance principle: Risk based and data driven			

Performance measure 4.2: The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year	The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year	The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year	The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year
Description The ACMA has implemented BetStop – the National Self-Exclusion Register™ (NSER), which allows Australians to self-exclude from all licensed interactive wagering services for a minimum of 3 months. The service launched in August 2023. The NSER is a central register of people who have chosen to self-exclude from all licensed interactive wagering services in Australia. Licensed interactive wagering providers use the register to check if a person is self-excluded and must stop providing services to them if they are. The ACMA's performance measure focuses on the availability of this service to wagering providers.			
Rationale The measure provides a long-term quantitative assessment of our performance in providing the NSER by evaluating the availability of the data-checking service to the wagering industry.			
Method We will assess the availability of the data-checking service using a quantitative assessment of performance-indicator data provided monthly by the register operator. This will identify the percentage of time each month that the data-checking service was available and will be used to calculate the availability across the year.			
Type of measure: Output			
Data/information sources: Monthly performance reports and incident notifications provided by the register operator, Dataworks Group Limited (formerly IXUP)			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information			
Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust			

Performance measure 4.3: Compliance with Emergency Call Service answering time performance requirements supporting timely access to Triple Zero is maintained

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
The Emergency Call Person meets its daily grade of service targets	The Emergency Call Person meets its daily grade of service targets	The Emergency Call Person meets its daily grade of service targets	The Emergency Call Person meets its daily grade of service targets
Description The Emergency Call Service enables end users to access emergency assistance by calling Triple Zero (000). Under the Telecommunications (Emergency Call Service) Determination 2019 (the Determination), the Emergency Call Person is responsible for answering emergency calls and transferring them to the requested emergency service organisation, such as police, fire or ambulance. The Determination sets minimum answering time performance requirements for the Emergency Call Person. As part of its role in supporting access to critical communication services, the ACMA monitors compliance with these regulatory requirements including timely public access to the Emergency Call Service. The measure is met where the Emergency Call Person complies with section 48 of the Determination, being that on each day: • 85% of emergency calls are answered by a call-taker within 5 seconds of reaching the relevant answering point • 95% of emergency calls are answered by a call-taker within 10 seconds of reaching the relevant answering point.			
Rationale This performance measure provides a transparent assessment that Triple Zero calls are answered in a timely manner and is the core measure of the Emergency Call Person's performance set out in regulation. This performance measure supports the ACMA's corporate objective of ensuring the effective regulation of essential communications services. It also supports the transparent assessment of whether regulatory requirements that underpin timely public access to the Emergency Call Service (Triple Zero) are being met. Monitoring performance against these requirements provides assurance that regulatory arrangements supporting access to critical communications services are operating as intended.			

Method

We will make a quantitative assessment of the daily grade of service. The Emergency Call Person provides data to the ACMA monthly. The annual assessment will be based on the 12 monthly assessments.

Where the daily grade of service has not been achieved, a compliance assessment will be undertaken to determine if the failure resulted from a matter beyond the Emergency Call Person's control and if further enquiries or investigation are required.

The performance measure is met when the answering timeframes have been achieved and when failures to achieve the answering timeframes have been assessed and accepted as being beyond the Emergency Call Person's control.

The Determination sets out that the Emergency Call Person will not be in breach if a failure to reach a daily target is due to a matter beyond the Emergency Call Person's control and could not have been reasonably foreseen.

Type of measure: Effectiveness (proxy)

Data/information sources: Monthly Emergency Call Service performance reports

PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information

Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust

Performance measure 4.4: Investigations undertaken are completed within the target timeframes			
2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
90% of investigations are completed within 6 months, 95% within 12 months and 100% within 18 months of commencement	90% of investigations are completed within 6 months, 95% within 12 months and 100% within 18 months of commencement	90% of investigations are completed within 6 months, 95% within 12 months and 100% within 18 months of commencement	90% of investigations are completed within 6 months, 95% within 12 months and 100% within 18 months of commencement
Description We investigate and ensure compliance with relevant legislation, industry codes, standards and licence conditions within the media and communications sector. Our investigations arise from complaints received from members of the public and from proactive monitoring and risk assessments. The scope and complexity of investigations can vary significantly, depending on the nature of the issue. Some investigations may involve technical complexities and require extensive data analysis, external advice and multiple parties. The time required to complete each investigation, therefore, also varies.			
Rationale This measure contributes to the overall performance objective by assessing the efficiency of the ACMA's investigations of communications content and services. The measure assesses the efficiency of investigations by assessing the extent to which we completed them within targeted timeframes. Achieving the measure demonstrates that the ACMA's investigation activities are efficiently delivered to support Australian consumers' confidence in the communications content and services available to them. The target aims to ensure timely completion of investigations into communications and content services, which is crucial for maintaining regulatory efficiency and responsiveness. By establishing specific completion rates – 90% within 6 months, at least 95% within 12 months and 100% within 18 months – the target addresses the need for thoroughness, while also promoting efficiency. This approach accommodates the investigation of complex and high-risk matters without compromising quality and comprehensiveness due to time constraints.			
Method The number of investigations completed within 6, 12 and 18 months of being opened will be divided by the total number of investigations completed in the reporting period to establish a percentage of investigations completed within each of those timeframes.			
Type of measure: Efficiency (proxy)			
Data/information sources: Internal investigation records			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information			
Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust			

Performance objective 5: The ACMA's regulatory activities contribute to Australian consumers having access to diverse media content and services

We are responsible for the compliance and enforcement of media content and services. This includes monitoring industry to ensure it follows the rules set in legislation, industry codes, standards and licences. If a regulated entity does not comply with their obligations, a range of enforcement tools can be used, consistent with our published compliance and enforcement policy. We are also responsible for broadcasting licensing and renewal decisions for the media content and services industry, including issuing and managing broadcast content licences and community broadcasting licences.

Performance measure 5.1: Community broadcasting licence renewal decisions are made within the statutory timeframes			
2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
100% of decisions made within statutory timeframes	100% of decisions made within statutory timeframes	100% of decisions made within statutory timeframes	100% of decisions made within statutory timeframes
Description The ACMA is responsible for community broadcasting licensing and renewal decisions. Community broadcasting plays an important role in Australia, delivering content that is diverse and relevant to the local community. The goals of community broadcasters are to: • promote a diverse range of broadcasting for the Australian public • develop and reflect Australian identity, character and cultural diversity • provide local content.			
Rationale This measure provides a long-term quantitative assessment of our activities by evaluating the extent to which community broadcasting licence renewal decisions meet statutory timeframes. Timely decision-making is essential to maintain continuity in community broadcasting services, which provide diverse and locally relevant content to the Australian public. Meeting this target ensures that the regulatory framework supports uninterrupted service delivery and allows broadcasters to contribute to cultural diversity and local identity.			
Method We will use a quantitative assessment of whether community broadcasting licence renewal decisions were made within the statutory timeframes. We will identify licences due to expire in the relevant financial year where an application for renewal has been received from the licensee. We will compare the date the renewal decisions were made to the licence expiry dates.			
Type of measure: Efficiency (proxy)			
Data/information sources: Records of licence renewal applications			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information			
Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust			

Performance measure 5.2: Media control notifications and captioning order applications are processed within statutory timeframes			
2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
100% of notifications and applications processed within statutory timeframes	100% of notifications and applications processed within statutory timeframes	100% of notifications and applications processed within statutory timeframes	100% of notifications and applications processed within statutory timeframes
Description The ACMA is responsible for monitoring and enforcing statutory control and media diversity rules, including managing registers with information about the control of media operations. We are also responsible for processing applications for target reduction or exemption orders from captioning obligations by broadcasters.			
Rationale This measure assesses the timeliness of the ACMA's work by checking if media control notifications and captioning order applications are processed within the statutory timeframes.			
Method To assess if we met timeframes, we will compare the date that media control notifications and captioning applications were received with the date the notifications and applications were processed.			
Type of measure: Efficiency (proxy)			
Data/information sources: Notification and application records			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information			
Regulator performance principle: Continuous improvement and building trust			

Performance measure 5.3: Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received

2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received	Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received	Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received	Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received
Description Certain broadcasters are required to broadcast a minimum amount of Australian content and report to the ACMA annually. There are also rules about showing captions on some programs that broadcasters must report on to the ACMA each year. We use this data to prepare and release the following reports: • content compliance report (metropolitan networks) • content compliance report (regional networks) • free-to-air broadcasters' and subscription TV licensees' captioning compliance reports.			
Rationale This measures whether the ACMA assessed and published the annual compliance results within 6 months. Achieving the measure demonstrates that the ACMA is efficiently assessing industry compliance with the Australian and children's content and captioning statutory obligations and, therefore, supporting Australian consumers' access to diverse media content and services.			
Method To assess whether the annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting were finalised within 6 months, we will compare the dates when industry data was received with the dates the reports were finalised.			
Type of measure: Efficiency (proxy)			
Data/information sources: Annual compliance results and internal documentation			
PBS links: Outcome 1, Program 1.2: Consumer safeguards, education and information			
Regulator performance principle: Collaboration and engagement			

Appendix A: Detailed changes to performance information

The following table describes changes made to the 2026–27 corporate plan performance framework, compared to the 2025–26 corporate plan.

Table 1: Updates to performance information for 2026–27

2025–26 corporate plan performance framework	Updates made to 2026–27 corporate plan performance framework
Key activity 1: Support an efficient and reliable communications infrastructure	No change
Performance objective 1: The ACMA's spectrum planning, allocation and licensing activity meets the needs of the communications industry	No change
Performance measure 1.1: The spectrum management work program is informed by ACMA's consultation with spectrum users, industry, and government	No change
Performance measure 1.2: Apparatus licensing issue and renewal decisions meet the statutory requirements	Discontinued – this measure assesses whether apparatus licensing issue and renewal decisions met statutory requirements. Compliance with statutory requirement is expected to be achieved in all instances, and performance results have remained stable across multiple reporting periods. Performance in this area will be monitored and reported through other mechanisms, rather than as an entity-level performance measure.
Performance measure 1.3: The ACMA's communications infrastructure compliance activities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm	Renumbered to 1.2
Performance measure 1.4: Major spectrum allocations are held effectively	Renumbered to 1.3 Amended – the description has been updated to include reference to the renewal of expiring spectrum licences as a form of major allocation of spectrum.
Performance objective 2: The ACMA's contribution to the international spectrum framework supports the needs of the Australian communications industry	No change

Performance measure 2.1: Australia's international engagement strategies are informed by the ACMA's consultation with industry and government.	No change
Performance objective 3: The ACMA's activities contribute to telecommunications infrastructure providers having confidence that they are appropriately authorised and enabled to provide communication services.	No change
Performance measure 3.1: Telecommunications carrier licensing and submarine cable permit activities meet statutory requirements.	No change
Performance measure 3.2: Equipment regulation appropriately mitigates the risk of harm to communications networks and people using or working on those networks.	No change
Performance measure 3.3: Numbering services are available 99% of the time and 99.9% of numbering transactions are processed within 5 seconds.	Discontinued – this measure relates to the operational availability of numbering services, which has demonstrated stable performance across multiple reporting periods. Operational availability will continue to be monitored through internal performance reporting processes, rather than as an entity-level performance measure.
Key activity 2: Build consumer trust in the use of communications content and services.	No change
Performance objective 4: The ACMA's activities contribute to Australians having confidence in the content and services available to them.	Amended – the objective wording has been updated to 'The ACMA's activities contribute to Australians having confidence in telecommunications, broadcasting and online content and services' to improve clarity on the scope of activities captured under the objective.
Performance measure 4.1: Australians' usage of communications services.	No change
Performance measure 4.2: The NSER data checking service is available to the wagering industry 99.95% or more of the time for the year.	No change

Performance measure 4.3: The DNCR is available to the Australian public 99.5% or more of the time.	Discontinued – this measure relates to the operational availability of the Do Not Call Register, which has demonstrated stable performance across multiple reporting periods. Operational availability will continue to be monitored through internal performance reporting processes, rather than as an entity-level performance measure. In 2026–27, performance measure 4.3 has been replaced with a new measure relating to the ACMA's role in supporting access to the Triple Zero emergency call service. This new measure maintains appropriate coverage of performance objective 4, including the ACMA's responsibilities in relation to telecommunications consumer safeguards.
Performance measure 4.4: Investigations undertaken are completed within the target timeframe.	Renumbered to 4.3
Performance measure 4.5: The ACMA's communications content and services compliance activities are informed by a risk-based assessment of harm.	Discontinued – this measure focuses on how risk-based assessment of harm informs the setting of compliance priorities. Further consideration will be given to how this aspect of performance is reflected within the ACMA's performance framework to provide more meaningful insight into performance over time.
Performance objective 5: The ACMA's regulatory activities contribute to Australians having access to diverse media content and services	No change
Performance measure 5.1: Enforcement decisions to accept or give agreed measures, enforceable undertakings or remedial directions, or to seek injunctions deliver improved compliance by the relevant regulated entity.	Discontinued – this measure assesses whether enforcement actions contribute to improved compliance by regulated entities. While timeliness of rectification and subsequent findings of non-compliance remain important indicators of enforcement effectiveness, further consideration will be given to how sustained compliance outcomes over time are reflected within the ACMA's performance framework for 2027–28.
Performance measure 5.2: Community broadcasting licence renewal decisions are made within the statutory timeframe.	Renumbered to 5.1

Performance measure 5.3: Media control notifications and captioning order applications are processed within statutory timeframes.	Renumbered to 5.2
Performance measure 5.4: Annual compliance results for Australian content and captioning reporting are finalised within 6 months of reports being received.	Renumbered to 5.3

Part 2

eSafety Commissioner

Message from the eSafety Commissioner



The online world Australians rely on every day is changing fast. New technologies are reshaping how we connect, learn, work and take part in public life. They are also reshaping harm.

That is the challenge at the heart of this corporate plan.

For the eSafety Commissioner (eSafety), the task ahead is not simply to keep up. It is to stay focused on where harm is growing, to act with purpose when the stakes are high, and to keep building an online environment that is safer, more transparent and more accountable.

The work of eSafety is anchored in people's lives.

Behind every complaint, every report and every call for action is a person trying to navigate a digital world that can be empowering, but can also be exploitative and overwhelming. Often, that person is a child or a young person. Sometimes it is a parent trying to help. Sometimes it is a teacher. Other times it is a frontline worker, or someone living with abuse that has followed them onto a screen and into their daily life.

That human reality matters. It is what keeps eSafety focused. It is also what drives the work set out in this plan.

Smart regulation for a changing world

The environment we are operating in is becoming tougher, faster and more complex. Harm can spread quickly across services and across borders. Platforms change. New products and features appear at pace. Technologies that promise convenience or creativity can also be used to manipulate, threaten, exploit or intimidate.

At the same time, expectations of regulators are rising here in Australia and around the world. People want action. They want clarity. They want institutions that are prepared to lead.

This plan sets out how we will respond in 2026–27. It reflects an organisation meeting the rising challenge of online harm with a clear sense of purpose.

eSafety pays attention to how technologies are used in real life, especially by children and young people. We stay focused on the services, systems and risks most likely to cause serious harm, drawing on prevention, support and systemic action to support Australians and hold industry to account. We are future-ready and positioned to adapt as the environment changes.

That is the approach eSafety will continue to take in the year ahead.

A major part of our work will be focused on enforcing Australia's social media minimum age requirements. This is a significant reform within a broader regulatory agenda designed to lift safety standards and place greater responsibility on services to prevent harm.

We know families, educators, and young people need to be supported through this significant cultural change. Our job is not only to enforce the regulation, but also to help Australians understand the changes, how to respond and support their families, and to enhance digital literacy skills in preparation for the online world.

That is why this plan places such strong emphasis on guidance, education and public communication alongside enforcement and oversight.

The people and systems behind our work

None of this happens without capability.

One of the clearest messages in this plan is that eSafety's effectiveness depends on whether we have the people, systems and capabilities to achieve our goals.

That means supporting our workforce, investing in leadership and prioritising staff wellbeing, especially in roles that involve distressing and sensitive material. It means strengthening digital systems, evidence handling, analytics, cyber security and the careful use of AI where it can reduce strain and support better outcomes.

It also means building a stronger public voice, so we can explain the risk of online harms clearly, reach people earlier and speak with authority in a crowded, fast-moving information environment.

Good governance is also critical, including strong risk management, clear oversight and disciplined decision-making. These are not separate from our mission. They are part of how we deliver it.

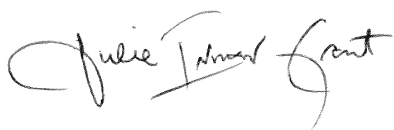
Also critical to our success are the staff of eSafety, bringing expertise, judgment, care and determination to work that is often demanding and sometimes emotionally difficult. They do it because they believe in the purpose of this agency and in the importance of making the online world safer for Australians.

The year ahead, with purpose

eSafety's plan for FY 2026–27 is designed to meet the moment.

It is ambitious, but grounded. It is practical and forward-looking. Above all, it is shaped by this simple conviction: Australians deserve an online environment that is safer, more positive and more worthy of their trust.

That is what this plan is designed to support. It is also what the people of eSafety are working to deliver.



Julie Inman Grant PSM
eSafety Commissioner

Our purpose

About the eSafety Commissioner

eSafety is Australia's independent regulator for online safety. We work to protect Australians from serious online harm by using our powers under Australian Government legislation – primarily the *Online Safety Act 2021* (the Online Safety Act).

Online harm refers to actions that occur entirely or partly online and can damage a person's social, emotional, psychological, financial or physical wellbeing. These harms can come from content, conduct, or contact.

The Online Safety Act defines eSafety's responsibilities. It includes 2 world-leading initiatives – the Basic Online Safety Expectations and social media minimum age obligation – and provides for the development of industry codes or standards to regulate illegal and restricted online content. The Online Safety Act also includes 4 public complaints schemes:

- the Adult Cyber Abuse Scheme
- the Cyberbullying Scheme for children
- the Image-Based Abuse Scheme
- the Online Content Scheme for illegal and restricted material.

Additionally, eSafety has powers under the Online Safety Act to restrict access to material depicting abhorrent violent conduct during an online crisis event.

The eSafety Commissioner is an independent statutory office holder, supported by staff from the ACMA. In keeping with the Australian Government's Statement of Expectations and eSafety's Statement of Intent, this corporate plan has been developed in line with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and related legislation and guidance material.

Purpose

To help safeguard all Australians from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences.

Vision

Through prevention, protection and proactive systemic change, Australians are supported and empowered to engage more safely online, and globally industry is enabled to meet legislated safety expectations.

Values

Our culture and values support us to achieve our purpose, now and into the future. We are committed to the Australian Public Service (APS) values of being impartial, committed to service, accountable, respectful, ethical and good stewards.

Complementing the APS values, we have developed our own eSafety-specific values.

- **Innovation** – challenging the status quo and doing things differently to lead the world to a safer online environment.
- **Empowerment** – providing skills and knowledge to Australians so they have positive online interactions and know what to do when they encounter online harm or feel unsafe online.
- **Compassion** – supporting Australians through difficult online experiences, providing help in an inclusive, empathetic and respectful way.
- **Fairness** – approaching our work ethically and transparently, in a considered, fair and proportionate manner, informed by evidence and research.
- **Collaboration** – genuinely connecting with partner organisations and industry bodies, cooperating, and sharing information, insights and expertise.
- **Excellence** – providing online safety leadership on behalf of the Australian Government, ensuring we always have the Australian people in mind when improving and delivering our regulatory services and functions.

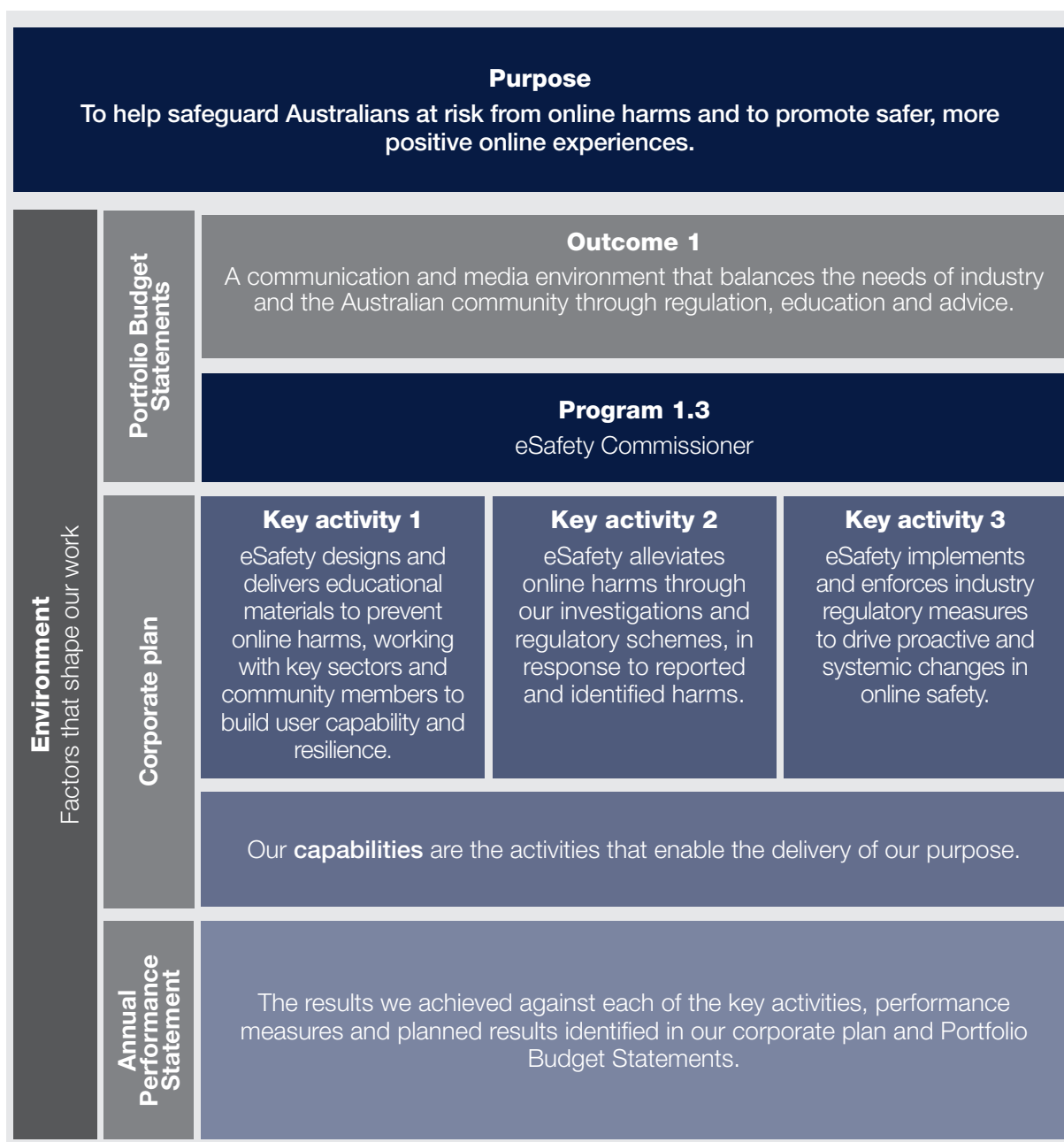
Our key activities

We achieve our purpose through 3 key pillars:

- **Prevention** – eSafety designs and delivers educational materials to prevent online harms, working with key sectors and community members to build user capability and resilience.
- **Protection** – eSafety alleviates online harms through our investigations and regulatory schemes, in response to identified harms.
- **Promoting proactive and systemic change** – eSafety implements and enforces industry regulatory measures and expectations to drive proactive and systemic change in online safety.

Further information on our strategic priorities can be found in the [Australian Government's Statement of Expectations](#) and our corresponding [Statement of Intent](#).

Corporate planning framework



Our environment

Online safety never stands still.

The systems, services and behaviours that shape people's digital lives are changing fast, and the risks are changing with them. New products, features and services appear quickly, then combine with other technologies in ways that can create new harms, intensify known harms and widen their reach.

Much of this activity takes place across borders, through services based overseas and operating under different laws and regulatory systems.

To achieve our purpose in this environment, eSafety must innovate, collaborate and regulate effectively. We are doing that in practical ways. We are developing new education and proactive awareness responses through products such as our webinar series and Online Safety Advisories which respond to topical and emerging online issues.

We are also investing in our people so we can respond to a more demanding and complex online environment.

Partnerships are a vital part of that response. We work with international regulators and governments to share knowledge, strengthen capability and support more consistent regulation across borders.

At the same time, we remain focused on mature, fit-for-purpose regulation that targets the services and content most likely to cause serious harm to Australians. That means understanding what is changing, staying focused on the risks that matter most, and acting early where we can make the biggest difference.

Global environment

Many of the services eSafety regulates are based overseas and operate across multiple jurisdictions. They are shaped by different cultures, laws, policy settings and market pressures.

But the harms Australians experience on those services do not stop at national borders. Risks, content and harmful conduct can move quickly across countries, which makes international developments directly relevant to eSafety's work.

Regulators are taking a more active role in many of the places shaping online safety. Australia's Online Safety Act, the European Union's Digital Services Act and the UK's Online Safety Act all reflect a broader shift towards stronger regulation of online services.

There is also growing focus on artificial intelligence, including the European Union's AI Act and the US AI Action Plan.

This creates opportunity, but it also brings challenges. When approaches are aligned, stronger regulation can lift standards, improve accountability and make it easier to drive change across borders. When approaches are fragmented, friction can grow and regulatory action can lose force.

We work closely with regulators and governments overseas to share knowledge and build a stronger, more coherent global approach to online safety. We also maintain bilateral exchanges with key regulatory partners to share insights, build experience and support more consistent approaches to support industry compliance by reducing the risk of fragmented global laws.

In 2026, eSafety will continue working with the European Commission's DG CONNECT and UK regulator Ofcom with a focus on age assurance. Together, we will examine what effective age assurance involves, how regulators can enforce safety requirements on adult platform services and other providers, how technology is changing, and how data access and independent research can support effective regulation.

Australia's world first social media minimum age requirements have attracted global attention. In 2026, eSafety will work with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts to brief overseas governments and partners on the new obligation and provide transparent updates on its progress and learnings.

Tech environment

Technological change continues at speed. As innovation grows, so does the volume, sophistication and targeting of harmful content and harmful contact. New and emerging technologies are changing how harm is created, delivered and experienced online.

One example is the evolution of agentic systems that can plan, act and carry out tasks with less direct user input. These developments create new risks for users and put new pressure on the systems meant to keep them safe.

As harms grow and change, new interventions are required and there is more pressure to respond, manage risk and keep people safe.

Together, these shifts add to the complexity of our work and reinforce the need for clear priorities.

Our approach is therefore grounded in a risk-based approach. We focus regulatory responses on the online harms most likely to cause serious damage, especially to young people.

We will also keep anticipating and addressing new, emerging and evolving technology-facilitated harms, while staying alert to the opportunities new technologies may offer. In areas such as agentic AI, that means recognising the shift from harms affecting individual users to broader system-level issues, and adapting our thinking as those issues evolve.

For Australians, we will keep building awareness through our [Tech Trends and Challenges](#) papers, our [Converge blog series](#) and our [Online Safety Advisories](#). These products help people understand fast-moving issues such as [generative AI and child safety](#), [anonymous random chat services](#), [children's access to online pornography](#), [deepfake abuse in schools](#), [technology-facilitated coercive control](#), and [violent content reaching children](#).

There are also signs that pressure for safer design is growing. Young people are spending less time on older social platforms. Lawsuits overseas are challenging addictive design and governments are investigating harmful design features. Alternative platforms with more transparent algorithms are also gaining ground.

Industry developed, open-source tools are making trust and safety practices more accessible, helping small and medium platforms deal with harm earlier and more effectively. If that momentum continues, the next generation of online platforms will be shaped by stronger regulation, safer design, clearer recommender systems and sharper competition from agile, user-focused services.

Fiscal environment

In 2026–27, eSafety has been provided \$69.967m in funding, as outlined in the Portfolio Budget Statements. This funding will enable eSafety to continue delivering on the government's online safety agenda.

Regulatory environment

The Online Safety Act is the foundation of Australia's online safety framework. It sets out the powers and responsibilities of the eSafety Commissioner and reflects the changing nature of online risk. Since eSafety was established in 2015, the scope of our work has expanded significantly as the digital environment has grown more complex and the forms of harm Australians face online have continued to change.

That environment will keep shifting. Broader reforms to law and policy may also affect how eSafety regulates, especially where they overlap with our role.

This includes areas such as the Criminal Code and the National Classification Scheme. Reform in these areas may affect how harms are defined, how responsibilities are allocated, and how different parts of the regulatory system work together in practice.

We support these processes where relevant by providing evidence-based research, insights and advice, and remaining focused on compliance monitoring and enforcement of our powers under the Online Safety Act.

We will continue to focus on the services, systems, and risks that matter most to Australians and take a practical, proportionate approach to regulation aligned with the Australian Government's Regulatory Policy, Practice and Performance Framework.

Our operating context

Critical capabilities

People, systems and communications that deliver

eSafety's impact depends on having the people, systems and capabilities to keep pace with a fast-changing online world,

The environment we work in is becoming harder, faster and more complex.

Harm can spread quickly. New technologies can change how harm appears and who it affects. They can also change the skills and tools we need to respond.

Meeting that challenge calls for agility and a sustained investment in capability. That includes a skilled and supported workforce, stronger technology and digital systems, and strategic communications that help the public understand the risk of online harms, find guidance and support, and access online safety education that helps the next generation prepare for the online world.

It means building capability in practical, forward-looking ways. We need to plan for future needs while constantly improving current performance, so our people and systems are ready for a larger and more demanding role.

Together, these capabilities help eSafety respond with confidence now and build for what comes next.

Workforce capability: The people behind our purpose

eSafety's people are central to everything we do.

Our people bring strong commitment to our purpose of helping safeguard Australians from online harms and promoting safer, more positive online experiences.

The impact of that work gives many of our people a strong sense of meaning and motivation, and our values shape how we complete our tasks: innovation, empowerment, compassion, fairness, collaboration and excellence.

We recognise that contribution in formal and informal ways, including through the annual eSafety Excellence Awards, which celebrate staff who have delivered significant outcomes and lived our values.

Recognition matters, but so does the setting in which people work.

eSafety staff are employees of the ACMA, which means they are covered by the ACMA Enterprise Agreement and its people and work health and safety frameworks and strategies.

eSafety partners with ACMA to support our people by working together on workforce planning, building capability, diversity and inclusion, reconciliation, and managing safety and wellbeing risks.

In 2026–27, one priority will be workload management and prioritisation.

The Australian Public Service Employee Census gives agencies a valuable view of workplace culture, leadership, wellbeing and engagement. In response to eSafety's 2025 results, we are focusing on prioritisation and workload management as an area for action. That reflects the reality of our operating environment.

As our regulatory duties grow in scale and complexity, we need to keep reviewing how we prioritise work within our available staffing resources, while protecting staff wellbeing. Our action plan emphasises that maintaining this balance is a collective responsibility across eSafety.

We will also improve our workforce planning by making sure it fits better with our overall organisational planning and risk management. This will help ensure we have the right people and the right skills, both now and into the future.

That work will identify current and emerging capability gaps, as well as take account of labour market trends and the skills needed to support our strategic direction.

Growing our capability also depends on good leadership.

In 2026–27, strengthening manager capability, psychosocial leadership and regulatory capability will remain major areas of focus.

Wellbeing will stay front and centre. Some eSafety roles are emotionally demanding because they involve distressing or sensitive content.

Our joint work health and safety commitment with ACMA reflects the importance of a safe and supportive working environment.

Together, we deliver health and wellbeing initiatives designed to support staff and manage psychosocial risks early, so our people are better equipped for the unique challenges of this work.

Technology and digital capability: Strengthening the systems behind regulation

Technology and digital capability underpin eSafety's regulatory work.

Strong systems help us manage complaints, investigations, compliance activity and enforcement more effectively. They also give us a clearer view of our work and make activity easier to track, which supports better decisions across the organisation.

In 2026–27, a major focus will be the transformation of customer relationship management and case management systems. This work will strengthen eSafety's regulatory functions, workflows and processes to give us a clearer view of how they operate and help us manage them more efficiently.

We will also continue modernising public-facing forms and the systems behind them to improve usability for the public and improve the quality of the data we rely on.

Digital capability is also critical to investigations. eSafety will continue enhancing its tools and capability for collecting, retaining and storing digital evidence so investigations can proceed with stronger support and greater reliability.

Cyber security remains a core priority. In 2026–27, eSafety will continue strengthening its cyber security capability to support cyber resilience and align with Australian Signals Directorate guidance, the Information Security Manual, and better practice across government.

We will use artificial intelligence where it can add clear value. This includes support for complaint handling, while still maintaining a human in the loop, and practical steps to reduce staff exposure to harmful material. It will also improve operational efficiency.

As with other capability investments, the goal with AI is not technology for its own sake. It is to help staff work more effectively and make better decisions, while reducing avoidable strain.

Data and analytics capability will continue to grow. Stronger analytics can provide deeper understanding across compliance, enforcement, complaints and investigations. Better insight helps us make better decisions and act earlier, with a clearer sense of where to focus.

These investments depend on people as much as systems. In 2026–27, eSafety will continue supporting staff through training, learning and development designed to grow technology and digital capability across the organisation.

Strategic communications and engagement: Building a trusted public voice

Strategic communications facilitate and promote eSafety's reporting schemes and support services, raise awareness of online safety issues and build digital literacy among diverse audiences across Australia.

They also explain and amplify eSafety's regulatory actions, increasing their effectiveness and maintaining public trust in Australia's online safety framework.

In 2026–27, eSafety will continue to strengthen strategic communications, maintaining a powerful voice across all media channels, building trust and authority with best-practice online safety guidance, and enhancing communications clarity and consistency across the organisation.

To do this we will continue positioning eSafety as a trusted regulator and national leader in online safety awareness, with a focus on building digital and AI literacy, drawing on our thought leadership agenda and the strength of our public voice.

We will streamline and better coordinate our education and communications activities across the organisation to enhance our messaging, build our reputation as Australia's most trusted source of online safety information and better support our work with communities, partners and stakeholders.

We will keep using our 4Ps framework – Prevention, Protection, Proactive and Systemic Change, and Partnerships – as a clear and consistent way to deliver on our remit and engage with public audiences.

We will keep enhancing our public-facing digital services, such as our website and reporting forms, to make sure communication and user pathways are integrated and reflect people-centred service principles.

We will make our communication with the public more proactive, aiming for faster, sharper and more forward-thinking updates.

We will continue to strengthen our approach by connecting data and insights with our communications strategy to better meet public need, while expanding our digital literacy initiatives, and increasing our presence through targeted national networks and forums.

These include the National Online Safety Education Council, the eSafety Youth Council, the Parent Advisory Group, and civil society roundtables.

In 2026–27, we'll keep ensuring our messaging, channels and engagement stay up-to-date and useful, so we continue to connect with people in ways that matter.

Risk oversight and management

Risk management framework: How we govern risk

Risk management is a core part of how eSafety operates. Our approach sits within the ACMA Risk Management Framework, which is established under section 16 of the PGPA Act and the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy. It also aligns with the ACMA Risk Management Policy. The Senior Executive Board and the Audit and Risk Committee oversee eSafety's enterprise risks.

eSafety's operational context is reflected in the eSafety Risk Management Guide and eSafety-specific templates, which support risk management across the organisation. The eSafety Risk and Compliance Committee and Senior Executive Board also review enterprise, strategic and emerging risks each quarter.

eSafety's risk management culture: Balancing opportunity and responsibility

eSafety is building a positive risk culture where risk management is part of the opportunities we pursue and the decisions we make. We encourage staff to identify and manage risks where needed, while balancing governance and compliance requirements with eSafety's strategic, operational and regulatory objectives.

Regulatory risks: Advice, oversight and consistency

The Regulatory Advisory Committee (RAC) advises the eSafety Commissioner on the use of key statutory powers, significant regulatory decisions, and cases involving potentially significant online harm or novel circumstances within our regulatory schemes.

The RAC also helps assess regulatory priorities over the planning cycle, promotes consistency and objectivity, and brings broad input from across eSafety into key regulatory decisions.

eSafety's key risks

Key risks area	How we will manage risk
Regulatory settings and capabilities do not keep pace with emerging online harm and technologies	• Monitor industry trends, harms and technology developments. • Apply consistent regulatory processes and quality checks. • Update procedures and capability for new legislative duties. • Apply internal insights consistently across regulatory work. • Maintain engagement with government, regulators, industry and civil society.
Promotion and awareness of eSafety's services and expertise and delivery of consistent and impactful education and engagement	• Planned and coordinated efforts across education, marketing and public communications improving consistency of messages. • Using research, community voice and evidence to inform content and outreach efforts. • Evaluation and feedback processes ensure initiatives remain accessible, relevant and effective. • Maturing processes to prioritise activities to enable response to emerging trends without disruption of key messages.
Data and insights are consistently generated and used to inform organisational and regulatory decisions.	• Maturing processes for data management, assurance and storage. • Coordinated internal data requests and insight development. • Standardising procedures for validating, interpreting and sharing insights. • Maintain visibility of data sources and limitations to support accurate decisions.
Maintenance of secure, scalable and resilient technology and systems	• Apply ICT and cyber policies, incident response plans, continuity plans and recovery procedures. • Conduct vulnerability assessments, security monitoring and align with all security standards. • Deliver priority technology uplift work, including regulatory capability improvements and security system enhancements.
Organisational and workforce capability and operating arrangements adequately support delivery of eSafety's functions	• Maintain workforce planning and capability development. • Support our workforce through work health and safety and wellbeing processes. • Maturing governance structures and compliance procedures. • Coordinate responsibilities and processes with ACMA.

External cooperation and partnerships

Online harms do not sit neatly within one system, one sector or one set of powers. They traverse borders and no single organisation can address them alone.

The stories that follow show how eSafety's partnerships turn policy into action.

They cover support for families as Australia's social media minimum age requirements take effect; bring community voices into the design of guidance and resources; improve responses to technology-facilitated abuse of children; strengthen links with law enforcement; build regulatory cooperation across borders; and contribute to the rapid removal of child sexual abuse material online.

These case studies sit within a broader network of relationships that supports eSafety's purpose. Some are local and community based. Some connect us with frontline services. Others link us with industry, civil society, and government agencies, including the Australian Federal Police (AFP), state and territory law enforcement, state and territory children's commissioners, the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC), and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA).

eSafety is also a member of the Digital Platform Regulators Forum, which brings us together with the ACMA, the OAIC, and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to support a more coordinated approach to regulating digital platforms.

We also explain eSafety's relationship with the ACMA. The eSafety Commissioner operates independently under the Online Safety Act, with staff and corporate support provided by the ACMA.

Co-operation gives eSafety greater reach and stronger insight. It helps us respond to harm more effectively and support Australians through change. It also strengthens our push for safer, more positive online experiences.

The ACMA

The Online Safety Act establishes the eSafety Commissioner as an independent statutory office holder, supported by the ACMA.

Under section 184 of the Online Safety Act, the ACMA provides staff to carry out eSafety's functions and delivers some corporate support services through a Memorandum of Understanding. All eSafety staff, apart from the Commissioner, are employed by the ACMA and are covered by its employment arrangements.

eSafety operates independently, but ACMA's support is essential to our ability to deliver on our purpose and achieve results.

Case studies

Helping Australian families navigate the new social media age rules

On 10 December 2025, the rules changed for millions of Australian families.

From that day, many social media platforms could no longer allow Australians under 16 to hold accounts. The Social Media Minimum Age law aims to protect young people from harmful design features, excessive screen time and exposure to content that can damage their health and wellbeing.

To help Australians adjust, eSafety launched the Social Media Age Restrictions Hub. Drawn from the experience and insight of those most affected, the Hub gives children, young people, families and professionals clear, practical and evidence-based support to help them understand what the law means and how to respond.

eSafety built the resources by working with a wide range of communities and experts, including the eSafety Youth Council, the National Online Safety Education Council (NOSEC), Trusted eSafety Providers and leading Australian mental health organisations. The scale of these consultations was significant, with NOSEC alone comprising 60 representatives from government, Catholic and Independent school sectors across every state and territory.

The package is designed specifically for those who need to use it. Young people receive clear advice, including information for under-16s and tips on managing existing accounts. Families have practical tools, such as conversation starters and support resources. Educators can draw on material that helps students navigate change, strengthen digital literacy and use updated Toolkit for Schools guidance.

eSafety took the information directly to the community, delivering 18 live webinars and answering questions from more than 5,300 parents, carers, educators and professionals who support young people. It also includes culturally safe resources for First Nations families, young people and students, as well as translations in 10 languages.

Shaping support with parents, not just for them

Parents and carers are often the first people children turn to when something goes wrong online. But many are trying to guide their children through a digital world that keeps shifting beneath their feet.

To make sure such voices shape its work, eSafety established the Parent Advisory Group. The group gives parents and carers a direct say in the support, guidance and resources families need, including work linked to the Social Media Minimum Age legislation and other strategic priorities.

The inaugural group brought together 12 organisations from across Australia, selected after inviting interested parties to apply.

Its members support families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, First Nations communities, regional and remote areas, people with disability, LGBTIQ+ communities, and low socioeconomic backgrounds.

On 18 March 2026, eSafety brought the group together for a full-day meeting in person. Members met with the Commissioner and senior executives, heard from regulatory, research and investigations experts, and joined a workshop to refine one of eSafety's key family resources, the Online Safety Parent Guide. They also joined a conversation about the online safety issues families may encounter in the future.

One of the group's strongest contributions this year was its detailed review of the eSafety Parent Guide which contains extensive online safety guidance for parents and carers. Drawing on deep professional knowledge and strong community connections, members gave practical advice to improve its clarity, usefulness and relevance. That feedback is helping eSafety sharpen one of its most important resources for families across Australia.

Putting children at the centre of the response

For many children living with domestic and family violence, technology can form part of the abuse. Phones, apps, games and connected devices can all be used to monitor, control, threaten or intimidate. Yet children and young people are often overlooked as victim-survivors in their own right.

eSafety's Children and Technology-Facilitated Abuse Project set out to change that. Funded by the Department of Social Services with \$3 million over 4 years from 2021 to 2025, the project placed children and young people at the centre of the response to technology-facilitated abuse in domestic and family violence settings.

The work grew from eSafety research published in 2020, which found that 27% of domestic violence cases involved technology-facilitated abuse of children. In response, eSafety brought together lived experience, frontline services and its own expertise to co-design, deliver and evaluate practical tools and prevention efforts.

That work produced a strong set of resources. These included new web content, videos and an awareness campaign developed in partnership with our Youth Advisory Group.

eSafety also developed a Frontline Workers Toolkit to help workers recognise and respond to abuse, build tech safety plans, and have safe conversations with children and young people.

The project reached frontline workers through webinars, conference presentations and practical training. Alongside this, the That's abuse campaign targeted 16 to 24-year-olds across social media, streaming and gaming platforms to encourage them to seek support.

An independent evaluation of the project in 2025 found it drew strongly on both lived experience and evidence, aligned closely with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children, and showed early positive results across its resources, training, collaboration and reach.

Working with law enforcement when online harm turns criminal

When online harm becomes a police matter, delay can carry real consequences.

That is why eSafety works closely with law enforcement agencies across Australia. Memoranda of Understanding with every agency provide the foundation for this co-operation, and eSafety is continually working to strengthen these arrangements by updating them to enable further information sharing.

Much of this work happens through direct notifications and intelligence provided between agencies. These connections help agencies move quickly when serious online harms become criminal matters.

eSafety is also working to improve awareness among police and other law enforcement workers of its role, powers and resources.

One important example is the National Law Enforcement Training Solution, which eSafety is developing with the Attorney-General's Department to strengthen police responses to family, domestic and sexual violence.

Beyond formal agreements and operational links, eSafety also works with partners such as the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation, the Australian Federal Police, and NSW Crime Stoppers on public campaigns and online safety awareness initiatives. This brings enforcement, prevention and public education together.

A global response to global harms

Online harms do not stop at borders, and neither can regulation.

That idea underpins the Global Online Safety Regulators Network (GOSRN), which eSafety helped establish and was first to be its chair.

GOSRN brings regulators together to share knowledge, build evidence and support coordinated action on online safety issues. Its mission is to strengthen regulatory coherence across jurisdictions and promote online safety regulation that respects individual rights.

In 2025, the Network kept building momentum. Members backed that growth with practical action: a joint statement on age assurance, deep-dive work to strengthen the evidence base for online safety regulation, and better systems for sharing information. They also established a Supervision Working Group and a Risk Assessment Working Group so regulators could compare approaches and share operational insight in core areas of regulatory work.

The Network also made room for younger voices. In April and May 2025, it brought together 19 youth ambassadors aged 18 to 24 from 9 countries for the Youth Dialogues.

Working with representatives from GOSRN, 5Rights, the Family Online Safety Institute, and the Integrity Institute, participants identified practical steps technology companies and policy makers could take to support safer and more informed online experiences.

Their work ended in a call-to-action letter urging greater investment in digital literacy, stronger user empowerment tools and more meaningful engagement with young people.

In 2026, the Network will continue that work through special projects and working groups, deeper engagement with youth, researchers and industry, and continued growth in membership and partnerships.

Coimisiún na Meán now chairs the Network and leads the new GOSRN Leadership Council, alongside Ofcom, the Council for Media Services of Slovakia, and the Dutch Authority for the Prevention of Online Terrorist Content and Child Sexual Abuse Material.

Faster action against child abuse material online

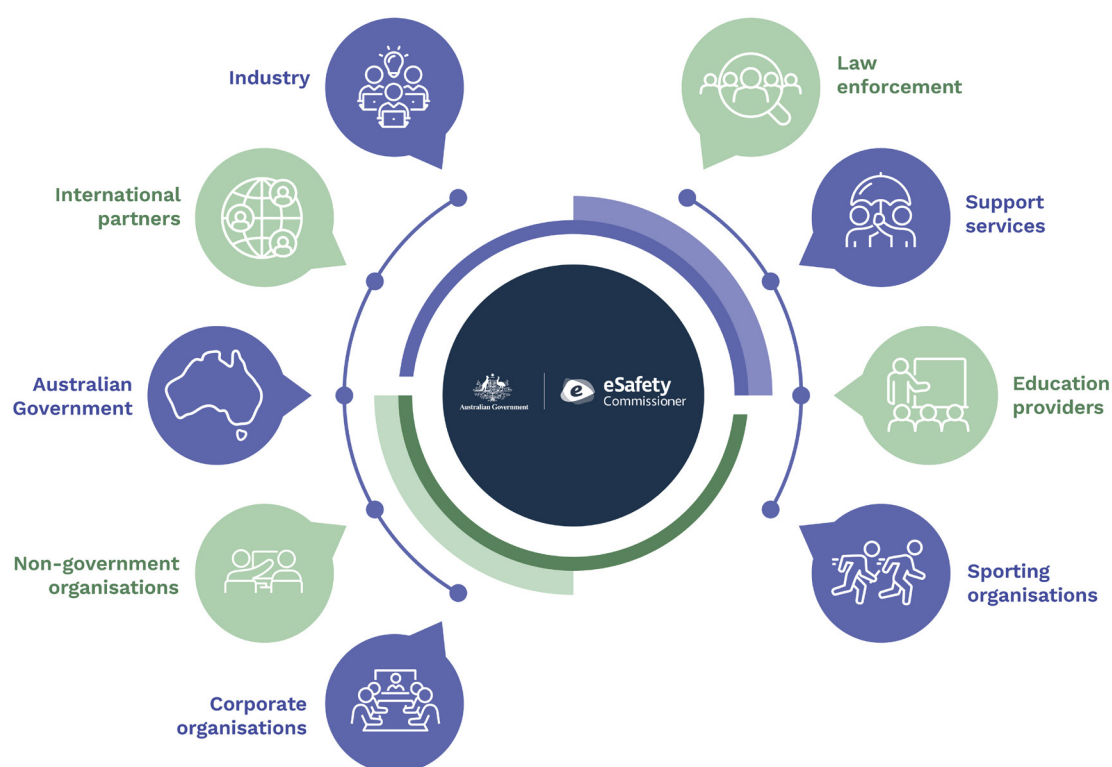
Removing child sexual abuse material from the internet demands speed, trust and international reach. No single country can do that alone. That is why eSafety's partnership with INHOPE, the International Association of Internet Hotlines, remains so important.

INHOPE is a global network of 57 hotlines focused on securing the rapid removal of child sexual abuse material from online platforms. Australia has been part of that network, in different forms, since 1999.

Each year, eSafety shares thousands of child sexual abuse material URLs with INHOPE to support swift action by law enforcement and industry partners. eSafety has also served on the INHOPE Board and contributes to several working groups, helping shape the network's broader efforts.

The value of the partnership is immediate and practical. INHOPE helps eSafety and its international counterparts cut through the jurisdictional and cross-border barriers that often delay action.

That co-operation strengthens the global response to child sexual abuse and exploitation and supports faster removal of some of the most harmful material on the internet.



Our performance

Key activity 1: eSafety designs and delivers educational materials to prevent online harms, working with key sectors and community members to build user capability and resilience.

Performance area 1.1

Australians are enabled by education, training and resources to prevent online harms.

Performance measure	Targets			
	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
1.1.1 Number of young people and adult participants in eSafety training and awareness sessions.	At least 27,000 participants	Increase from previous year		
1.1.2 Number of Be Connected learners who meaningfully engage with resources on beconnected.esafety.gov.au.	185,000	Maintain		
1.1.3 Number of surveyed Australians aged 16 and over who have an awareness of the eSafety Commissioner.	40%	Increase from previous year		

Rationale

By undertaking research, delivering education and training programs and producing online resources, we work to set a foundation to mitigate risk and prevent online harm from happening. We work with our prevention partners, such as community groups, educators, law enforcement agencies and Trusted eSafety Providers, to expand awareness and extend the reach of our online safety messages and services.

Methodology

1.1.1 We will make a quantitative assessment of the number of participants recorded in each session. Data will be in the form of monthly reports provided by internal trainers and staff members who conduct sessions. Training and awareness sessions include those delivered to teachers, pre-service teachers, mental health, social services and wellbeing professionals and domestic and family violence workers, corporates, parents and carers, senior Australians and others.

1.1.2 We will make quantitative assessment of the number of learners who have engaged meaningfully with resources on the Be Connected website. Unique visitors to the site will be considered to have meaningfully engaged with the resources if their session lasts longer than 10 seconds and has key interaction events, or has at least 2 page views or screen views.

1.1.3 We will make a quantitative assessment of surveyed Australians’ awareness of the eSafety Commissioner. The assessment will be made as the proportion of respondents from a nationally representative sample of approximately 1500 Australians aged 16 and over, who when prompted as to whether they are aware of the eSafety Commissioner respond in the affirmative.

Rationale for changes

1.1.1 No change

1.1.2 No change

1.1.3 No change

PBS links**Program 1.3 – The eSafety Commissioner**

This program contributes to the outcome by helping safeguard all Australians from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences.

eSafety designs and delivers educational materials to prevent online harms, working with key sectors and community members to build user capability and resilience.

Performance area 1.2

Educational programs, strategies and tools are based on an understanding of the specific needs of groups most at risk of online harm.

Performance measure	Targets			
	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
1.2.1 Educational resources are informed by research and/or insights and involve co-design or collaboration with targeted cohorts and/or advocates.	✓	Maintain		
1.2.2 Publication of research reports and papers that build the evidence base relating to online safety for Australians.	6 reports or papers published	Maintain		

Rationale

Through research, education and training programs, we work to set a foundation to prevent online harm. We co-design and develop evidence-informed resources and advice to increase the online safety and resilience of groups most at risk of online harm, such as young people, children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women, LGBTQI+ communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, older Australians, and people living with disability.

Methodology

1.2.1 We will undertake case study analysis of a selection of new or updated resources published throughout the year. We will identify case studies from a random selection of new or updated resources published throughout the year. These case studies will highlight the impact or performance of those resources.

1.2.2 We will make a quantitative assessment of the number of published research reports on the eSafety website, or in peer-reviewed journals.

Rationale for changes

1.2.1 No change

1.2.2 No change

PBS links

Program 1.3 – The eSafety Commissioner

This program contributes to the outcome by helping safeguard all Australians from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences.

eSafety designs and delivers educational materials to prevent online harms, working with key sectors and community members to build user capability and resilience.

Key activity 2: eSafety alleviates online harms through our investigations and regulatory schemes, in response to reported and identified harms.

Performance area 2.1

eSafety takes action to alleviate reported online harms.

Performance measure	Targets			
	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
2.1.1 Proportion of adult cyber abuse complaints where action is taken.	At least 80%	Maintain		
2.1.2 Proportion of cyberbullying complaints where action is taken.	At least 80%	Maintain		
2.1.3 Proportion of image-based abuse complaints where action is taken.	At least 80%	Maintain		
2.1.4 Proportion of critical illegal and restricted content investigations actioned within 2 business days.	At least 90%	Maintain		

Rationale

The Online Safety Act gives us powers to protect all Australians across 4 public complaints schemes: the Adult Cyber Abuse Scheme, the Cyberbullying Scheme for Australian children, the Image-Based Abuse Scheme, and the Online Content Scheme for illegal and restricted content.

We give responsive and compassionate help to people experiencing a range of online harms. Once someone reports harmful content to us, we aim to alleviate or reduce the harm as quickly as possible. We use our regulatory powers assertively but judiciously. We take both formal and informal actions to get results for people reporting online harms through the adult cyber abuse, cyberbullying, and image-based abuse schemes.

Our performance measure for the Online Content Scheme for illegal and restricted content considers the time it takes to action a critical investigation, rather than the proportion of finalised matters. Critical investigations refer to regulatory investigations into child sexual exploitation material that is or is likely to be refused classification under the National Classification Scheme. Our measure for this scheme is based on eSafety's response time because we refer almost all child sexual exploitation material to the INHOPE network for removal action by hotlines, industry and law enforcement within the hosting jurisdiction. Child sexual exploitation material represents approximately 87% of all material reported to the Online Content Scheme.

Methodology

2.1.1 We will undertake a quantitative analysis of data to determine the proportion of adult cyber abuse complaints that result in action being taken. Action is defined as any of the following: A complaint alert removal notice was issued. An issued complaint alert has the recorded action of 'Other action taken' and 'Account warned' as the outcome. A removal or end-user notice has the response field 'notice complied with' equal to 'yes'. A voluntary notice or service provider notification has been issued. Other actions have been taken including, referred to support services, referred to legal advice, guidance provided about reporting to police and/or referral to other agency, warm referral to support services or provided instructions to report to Social Media Services.

2.1.2 We will undertake a quantitative analysis of data to determine the proportion of cyberbullying complaints that result in action being taken. Action is defined as any of the following: A complaint alert, removal notice, end-user notice or service provider notification was issued. Information gathering or investigative powers were utilised in accordance with provisions in Part 13 or 14 of the Online Safety Act. There has been a referral to law enforcement, school or other agency or action taken referring to support services, parent, recommending they seek further legal advice or guidance provided to report to Social Media Services.

2.1.3 We will undertake a quantitative analysis of data to determine the proportion of image-based abuse complaints that result in action being taken. Action will be defined as any of the following: A complaint alert was given in relation to content or a user account, a service provider notification or removal notice was given, a remedial direction was given, a referral was made to the ACCCE and accepted, an investigation process was commenced, such as the use of an information gathering provision, or informal assistance was provided.

2.1.4 We will undertake a quantitative analysis of data which captures the creation of reports and a change in report status.

Rationale for changes

2.1.1 No change

2.1.2 No change

2.1.3 The giving of complaint alerts in relation to user accounts has been added as an action. This is due to circumstances where there have been threats to share intimate images, such as those in sexual extortion, however, no intimate images have been posted. It is important to report user accounts for this conduct. The functionality for service provider notifications has been introduced into the Image Based Abuse CRM and is being used. Informal assistance, including information and practical guidance, is often provided to complainants and has been included

2.1.4 No change

PBS links

Program 1.3 – The eSafety Commissioner

This program contributes to the outcome by helping safeguard all Australians from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences.

eSafety alleviates online harms through our investigations and regulatory schemes, in response to reported and identified harms.

Key activity 3: eSafety implements and enforces industry regulatory measures and expectations to drive proactive and systemic change in online safety.

Performance area 3.1				
Regulatory measures are in place and are leading to transparent positive safety interventions.				
Performance measure	Targets			
	2026–27	2027–28	2028–29	2029–30
3.1.1 Australians are protected from illegal and restricted online content through compliance with industry codes or standards.	At least 12 compliance activities undertaken.	15	15	15
3.1.2 Publication of transparency summaries in relation to responses received to reporting notices or information requests under the Basic Online Safety Expectations.	At least 2 transparency summaries published in relation to responses.	Maintain		
3.1.3 Compliance and enforcement activities for the social media minimum age restrictions are proportionate to the identified level and likelihood of risk.	✓			
3.1.4 Positive safety interventions have been taken by online safety providers in response to eSafety's regulatory activities	✓	Maintain		

Rationale

The Online Safety Act specifies industry regulatory measures to drive proactive and systemic change in online safety. These include industry standards or codes, the Basic Online Safety Expectations, and the social media minimum age.

The Online Safety Act provides for industry bodies or associations to develop codes to regulate certain types of harmful online material, and for eSafety to register the codes or determine standards. The development and registration of the first round of industry codes and standards was completed in 2023–24, focussing on class 1A and class 1B (unlawful) material. The second phase of industry codes development was completed in 2024–25 and focuses on class 1C and class 2 (age-restricted) material. Class 1 and 2 are categories of material provided for by the Online Safety Act, with reference to the National Classification Scheme. Class 1 refers to unlawful and seriously harmful material such as child abuse material and material that advocates terrorism. Class 1C and class 2 material is content that is restricted, such as online pornography and other high-impact material not suitable for people under 18 years of age.

The Basic Online Safety Expectations Determination 2022 sets out the Australian Government's expectations that social media, messaging, gaming, dating, file-sharing services and other apps and websites will take reasonable steps to keep Australians safe. The current determination was registered on 30 May 2024. eSafety can require online service providers to report on how they are meeting any or all the Expectations under the Online Safety Act, and can request information from providers under section 20 of the determination.

The *Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act 2024* introduced a requirement for certain social media platforms to take reasonable steps to prevent children under 16 from having accounts. This is one part of a broader strategy to create safer digital spaces for everyone. The Social Media Minimum Age restrictions aim to complement existing measures for protecting young users, especially where there are particular risks associated with accessing potentially harmful social media content and features such as algorithms tailoring content, and persistent notifications and alerts that have been found to have a negative impact on sleep, stress levels and attention.

Across the reporting period we will continue to use our powers to improve transparency and track positive safety interventions that can be linked to eSafety's actions. Evidence may include statements from online service providers that changes have been made because of eSafety regulatory activity, either communicated publicly by providers or to eSafety. Where appropriate, we will publish case studies and updates on these interventions. eSafety will also begin to use statements of compliance or non-compliance to incentivise industry to improve safety processes.

Methodology

3.1.1 Number of compliance activities undertaken. Indicative compliance activities for the reporting period include compliance assessments, commencing investigations, issuing information gathering notices, issuing reporting notices under the codes and standards, issuing formal warnings or other enforcement action.

3.1.2 Number of transparency summaries posted on the eSafety website.

3.1.3 We will undertake case study analysis of a selection of compliance activities undertaken throughout the year. These case studies will highlight compliance approaches that are targeted and proportionate to the level and likelihood of risk.

3.1.4 Assessment of positive safety interventions made by providers following eSafety regulatory activities. A positive safety intervention is considered to be a change made by a provider to address an identified area of weakness.

Rationale for changes

3.1.1 Compliance activities have been updated to reflect the increasing maturity of our compliance, investigation and enforcement processes

3.1.2 No change

3.1.3 This performance measure has been updated to reflect the post-implementation phase of the social media minimum age restrictions

3.1.4 No change

PBS links:

Program 1.3 – The eSafety Commissioner

This program contributes to the outcome by helping safeguard all Australians from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences.

eSafety implements and enforces industry regulatory measures and expectations to drive proactive and systemic change in online safety.

Regulatory performance

The Australian Government is focused on lifting regulator performance, capability and culture. To achieve these expectations and comply with best practice, we have developed tailored performance monitoring and reporting processes.

Our strategic objectives and performance measures directly support the accomplishment of the government's 3 principles of regulator best practice:

1. Continuous improvement and building trust: Regulators adopt a whole-of-system perspective, continuously improving their performance, capability and culture, to build trust and confidence in Australia's regulatory settings.
2. Risk-based and data-driven: Regulators manage risks proportionately and maintain essential safeguards while minimising regulatory burden, and leveraging data and digital technology to support those they regulate to comply and grow.
3. Collaboration and engagement: Regulators are transparent and responsive communicators, implementing regulations in a modern and collaborative way.

Principles of regulator best practice				
Key activities	Performance area	Continuous improvement and building trust	Risk-based and data-driven	Collaboration and engagement
1. eSafety designs and delivers educational materials to prevent online harms, working with key sectors and community members to build user capability and resilience.	1.1 Australians are enabled by education, training and resources to prevent online harms.	✓	✓	✓
	1.2 Educational programs, strategies and tools are based on an understanding of the specific needs of groups most at risk of online harm.	✓	✓	✓
2. eSafety alleviates online harms through our investigations and regulatory schemes, in response to reported and identified harms.	2.1 eSafety takes action to alleviate reported online harms.	✓	✓	✓
3. eSafety implements and enforces industry regulatory measures and expectations to drive proactive and systemic change in online safety.	3.1 Regulatory measures are in place and are leading to transparent positive safety interventions.	✓	✓	✓

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