

National Child Safety Review

Minutes of meeting – Item 1(f) 2025

Item number	2.0
Purpose	Confirm minutes of meeting – Item 1(f) 2025
Raised by	Child Safety Review Group (CSRG) Secretariat
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendations	
Attachments	Nil
Additional Issues to note	Nil

Please complete the following section:

Please indicate which agencies and non-government organisations can receive a copy of the paper (strike through those that cannot receive the paper):

ACECQA

Pages 2 through 4 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

- Some unresolved second order policy decisions are outstanding such as
Section 74 - not relevant , increasing feesSection 74 - not relevant

Item 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

- Suggested consideration of the EMM resolution re increasing fees in the workplan.

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Actions:

Section 74 - not relevant

CSRG31-A7

Section 74 - not relevant

Increasing fees; and

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 7 through 11 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Child Safety Reform Group – Detailed workplan in Phases

Item 1(f)		Section 74 - not relevant		
Provider accountability	Section 74 - not relevant			
	Fees	Policy Development	Policy development on options to increase the fees for providers to operate in the ECEC system, including differentiation between provider types. Consideration of how funds could be allocated to enhance regulatory activity.	Item 1(c)
	Section 74 - not relevant			

Pages 13 through 22 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Initiative	Steps and key components	Links to other pieces of work	Status
National Initiatives – progressing together			
Section 74 - not relevant			

Pages 24 through 25 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Increasing licensing fees	▪ Increase fees for providers (licenses), with differentiation across provider type. ▪ Exploration of possible diversion of funds to RAs.		Led by (tbd) New Last update: Agreed at EMM 22 August (through draft resolutions) Next expected milestone: Update at October EMM
Section 74 - not relevant			

Pages 27 through 39 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Project charter ECPG

Items 1(d), 1(f)

Project team:

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Project sponsor: EMM

Current problem statement	How can Australian Governments act decisively, utilising a range of levers, to ensure that all children experience safe and q uality ECEC and there is public confidence in ECEC.
Strategic objective	Australian Governments will work together to implement a workplan that brings all child safety and quality initiatives togeth er in a coherent and comprehensive proposal
	Item 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Initiative	Steps and key components	Links to work	Status
National Initiatives – progressing together			

Section 74 - not relevant			
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Pages 42 through 43 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Increasing Licensing fees

Increase fees for providers (licenses), with differentiation across provider type. Possible diversion of funds to RAs.

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 45 through 53 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

ECPG Items 1(d), 1(f)

Project charter ECPG Items 1(d), 1(f)

Project lead: NSW / AG		Project sponsor: EMM	
Project team:			
Current problem statement	How can Australian Governments act decisively, utilising a range of levers, to ensure that all children experience safe and quality ECEC and there is public confidence in ECEC.		
Strategic objective	Australian Governments will work together to implement a workplan that brings all child safety and quality initiatives together in a coherent and comprehensive proposal.		
	Items 1(f), 1(c)		Items 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 55 through 60 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

ECPG Items 1(d), 1(f)

Item / initiative	Priority for		Short term actions (in place by end 2025)	Medium term actions (in place by end 2026)	Long term actions (From 2027)	Status
Green: in train	<u>22 Aug</u>	<u>17 Oct</u>				
Orange: not yet prioritised	<u>SP EMM</u>	<u>EMM</u>				

Section 74 - not relevant						
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Increased fees for providers (licenses), with differentiation across provider type. Possible diversion of funds to RAs.

In progress.

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 62 through 67 redacted for the following reasons:

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- Section 74 - Not relevant
- Section 74 - not relevant

Ref.	Source	Decision no.	Decision summary	Item / initiative	Workstream	Lead / Governance	Phase	Theme
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Item 1(f)			Section 74 - not relevant					
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Pages 69 through 70 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Ref.	Source	Decision no.	Decision summary	Item / initiative	Workstream	Lead / Governance	Phase	Theme
38	Items 1(f), 1(c)		Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)	Licensing Increase the fees for providers to operate in the ECEC system and ensure there is appropriate differentiation between provider types.	Policy development	Item 1(c)	1	Regulatory powers
Section 74 - not relevant								

Pages 72 through 77 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant	
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Source Key	Details
	Section 74 - not relevant
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)	
	Section 74 - not relevant

Reform areas
Section 74 - not relevant
Regulatory powers
Section 74 - not relevant

Page 79 redacted for the following reason:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Table A: Phase 1

Policy development: Item 1(f) 2025

Initiative	Activity description (Short description)	Lead	Reform area
Section 74 - not relevant			
Licensing	P1.9 Consideration of increases to service approval/licencing fees, with differentiation between provider types.	Item 1(c)	Regulatory powers
Section 74 - not relevant			

Pages 82 through 88 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality

Item number	8
Purpose	This paper seeks AESOC’s consideration of the attached paper and resolution of any outstanding issues Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c) Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Raised By	Australian Government on behalf of the Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG)
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendations	

Please complete the following section:

Section 74 - not relevant

ACECQA

Section 74 - Not relevant



National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality

Item number	X
Purpose	This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen safety and quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, including progress on joint National Actions, responses to meeting outcomes, Items 1(d), 1(f) Items 1(d), 1(f)
Raised By	Australian Government on behalf of the Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG)
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendations	Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

That go beyond Please complete the following section:

Section 74 - Not relevant

ACECQA

Section 74 - Not relevant

National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality

Purpose

- 1 This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen safety and quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, including progress on joint National Actions, responses to 22 August 2025 meeting outcomes, Items 1(d), 1(f)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 94 through 96 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Background

22 August 2025 EMM - meeting outcomes

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

45 Comebacks resulting from discussion at the Item 1(f) 2025 meeting to be provided at today's meeting include:

Section 74 - not relevant

- e An update on work to consider how fees to operate in the ECEC system could be increased, with appropriate differentiation between provider types, and how funds could be allocated to enhance regulatory activity.

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 100 through 105 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant



National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality

Item number	5
Purpose	This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen safety and quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, including progress on joint National Actions, responses to meeting outcomes, Items 1(d), 1(f) Items 1(d), 1(f)
Raised By	Australian Government on behalf of the Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG)
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendations	Section 74 - not relevant c. note the updates provided on additional comebacks requested by EMM at the Item 1(f) meeting: Section 74 - not relevant iii. increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider

type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity is outlined in the paper.

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant



Section 74 - not relevant

That go beyond Please complete the following section:

Section 74 - not relevant

ACECQA

Section 74 - not relevant

National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality

Purpose

- 1 This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen safety and quality in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, including progress on joint National Actions, responses to 22 August 2025 meeting outcomes, Items 1(d), 1(f)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 110 through 114 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Background

22 August 2025 EMM - meeting outcomes

Section 74 - not relevant

56 Comebacks resulting from discussion at the Items 1(f), 1(g) 2025 meeting to be provided at today's meeting include:

Section 74 - not relevant

- e An update on work to consider how fees to operate in the ECEC system could be increased, with appropriate differentiation between provider types, and how funds could be allocated to enhance regulatory activity.

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 117 through 146 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant

National Child Safety Reform Group

Policy Options Paper

ECEC regulator fee reform

Policy Option Paper 1

ECEC regulator fee reform.

Executive summary

Rationale for change

Items 1(f), 1(c)

a report back on: *"increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity"*.

Fees to establish and operate early childhood services are very low when compared to other similar sectors, and not consistent with the regulatory costs to support safe and high quality service provision, or the policy objectives of governments.

This work aims to improve cost recovery, incentivise good outcomes, maintain service supply and availability, and minimise impacts on families and service quality.

Key issues

Annual service fees are paid by all services and are set according to care type and service size. Annual service fees range from \$319 to \$80, they are designed to account for the cost of many functions and activities performed by the regulators, including:

- the national quality assessment and rating process,
- monitoring and compliance activities,
- internal review of decisions, and
- many types of transactions, such as applications to vary or amend service and provider approvals.

However, regulator fees in the ECEC sector are low compared to similar sectors and have not kept pace with rising costs for regulators.

Transaction fees apply to specific applications and are payable when the application is made. For example, transaction fees apply to applications for provider approval, service approval, applications for temporary waivers and service waivers, and transfers of service approvals. Transaction fees range from \$133 to \$1,855.

Items 1(f), 1(c)

IN CONFIDENCE – NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Paper prepared by: Items 1(c)

Ref: 25/XXXXX

Page | 1

Version 2.1: Items 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(f), 1(c)

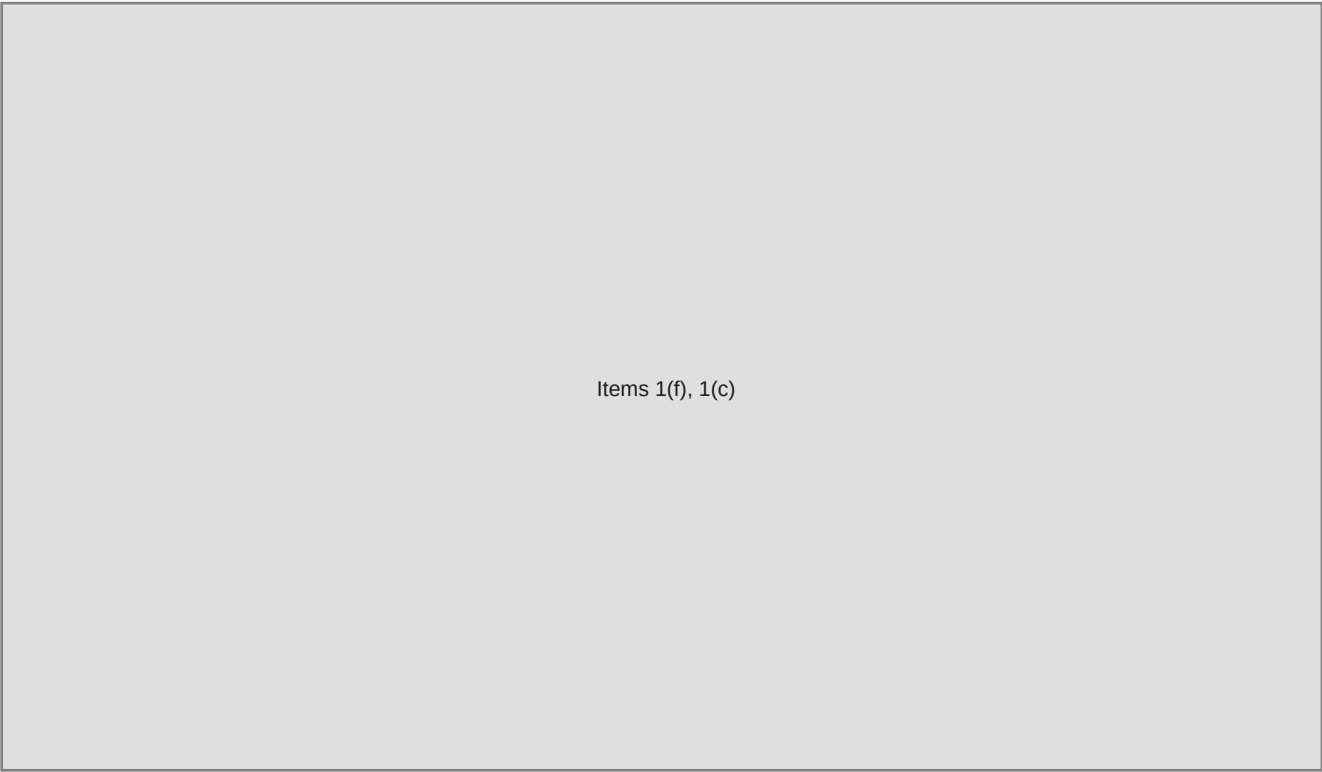
Principles for good fee design

Changes to fees should be developed in line with the *Commonwealth Charging Policy Principles*. These principles and their application in the ECEC context include:

- **Transparency:** Fees should be clearly published and communicated to the sector, including the basis for changes in fees, e.g. indexation.
- **Efficiency:** Fees should not be too small, as to not represent the cost of regulation. Fees should also not be excessive, generating more revenues than regulatory costs.
- **Performance:** Fees should account for the particular circumstances and characteristics of services. Fees should not unfairly impact the viability of smaller scale or not-for-profit services with a lower capacity to pay.
- **Equity:** Services that benefit from/generate the regulatory cost should pay fees commensurate to the costs they generate, e.g. larger services that require more complex regulatory management, higher risk services for investigations, applicants for application fees.
- **Simplicity:** Fees should not be overly complex – this may be a trade off with more efficient and targeted fee structures. This is particularly relevant to the quantum of data required for implementation or complexity of engagement with a new fee structure for the sector. National consistency should be maintained.
- **Consistency:** Fee settings should incentivise positive market behaviours that align to national ECEC policy goals, particularly that improves the safety and quality, access and equity. Changes to fees must be nationally agreed by Education Ministers.

Options

Items 1(f), 1(c)



Evaluating the options

Multi-criteria assessment is used to evaluate the relative merits of the options against overarching ECEC policy goals and the fee design principles above. Each option is assessed against the base case of no change (indexation only) and assigned a score against each of the evaluation criteria.

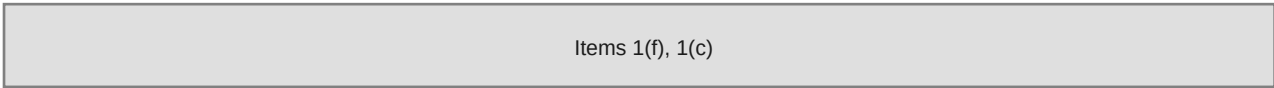
In general, most approaches score well on improving efficiency, equity and consistency with broader government objectives relative to the current baseline. In contrast, on simplicity, most approaches are neutral or more complex than the current fee structure.

The results support fee changes according to more differentiated service size and/or ownership structure. Relative to the current broad size-based structure, these types of changes can raise substantial revenue that is more aligned to capacity to pay and regulatory costs. They also maintain simplicity and consistency with national ECEC policy objectives.



Recommended option

Annual service fees



Items 1(f), 1(c)

Transaction fees

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Recommendations to Education Ministers

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Implementation pathways

The National Law provides a broad regulation-making power to prescribe fees and differentiate fees according to the type of class of service.

Reform to fees via the National Regulations is authorised under law as long as the fees are for the purpose of the National Law, “to regulate education and care services for children”. Preliminary

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

DRAFT

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

1. Problem Statement

Summary problem statement

- 1.1. Fees to establish and operate early childhood services are very low when compared to other similar sectors, and not consistent with the regulatory costs to support safe and high quality service provision, or the policy objectives of governments.

Detailed problem statements

- 1.2. Regulator funding has not kept up with sector growth or the strength of regulatory posture required to meet government and community expectations for child safety and service quality.
- 1.3. As a result of recent child safety issues, government reviews and inquiries, and increased community concerns regarding safety and quality, all jurisdictions are strengthening their regulatory posture in the ECEC sector.
- 1.4. The volume of complaints made and cases to investigate have been growing at a faster rate than the overall number of services and places in the sector, possibly in part due to increased community awareness of the potential for issues.
- 1.5. Revenue raised by the current system of regulator fees covers only a fraction of the costs of regulation. Fees are set very low relative to other regulated sectors such as aged care, and are also very low as a share of sector revenues.
- 1.6. In addition to rising costs of regulation, the current fee structure may not be well aligned with either capacity to pay or broader policy objectives.

2. Intended Outcomes

- 2.1. **Recover costs:** Fees paid by services are better aligned with actual regulatory and compliance costs.
- 2.2. **Align fees with policy objectives:** Fee design provides incentives to deliver higher quality and safety services.
- 2.3. **Maintain service supply and viability:** The supply of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) places and the viability of existing services are preserved, and fees take into account operational complexity.
- 2.4. **Minimise pass through and quality impacts:** Affordability impacts of passing on increased regulatory fees to families are minimised and service quality is preserved.

3. Existing Requirements/Environment

The current fee regime

- 3.1. The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (National Regulations) set the fees for children's education and care services regulated under the National Quality Framework.

- 3.2. Power to set fees within the National Regulations is authorised under the Victorian *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (the National Law).
- 3.3. Education Ministers are responsible for reviewing and approving the fee structure as the Ministerial Council responsible for the National Law.³
- 3.4. Fees are scheduled and collected by the Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and distributed to states and territories by the Australian Government. Fees are set from 1 July of each financial year and indexed annually in accordance with the Consumer Price Index.
- 3.5. ECEC regulators charge two types of fees, annual service fees and transaction fees.
- 3.6. **Annual service fees** are paid by all services and are set according to care type and service size. Annual service fees range from \$319 to \$802 (Table 1).

Table 1: ECEC Annual service fees 2025–2026

Service size	Centre-based care (places)	Family day care (educators)	Fee amount
Small	<24	<5	\$319
Medium	24-80	5-20	\$482
Large	81-100	21-60	\$641
Extra-large	>100	>60	\$802

Source: ACECQA, *Indexed fees 2025-2026*, available at: www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/indexation-of-fees/indexed-fees-2025-2026

- 3.7. Annual service fees are designed to account for the cost of many functions and activities performed by the regulators, including:
 - 3.7.1. the national quality assessment and rating process,
 - 3.7.2. monitoring and compliance activities,
 - 3.7.3. internal review of decisions, and
 - 3.7.4. many types of transactions, such as applications to vary or amend service and provider approvals.
- 3.8. However, regulator fees in the ECEC sector are low compared to similar sectors and have not kept pace with rising costs for regulators.
- 3.9. **Transaction fees** apply to specific applications and are payable when the application is made. For example, transaction fees apply to applications for provider approval, service approval, applications for temporary waivers and service waivers, and transfers of service approvals. Transaction fees range from \$133 to \$1,855.
- 3.10. In addition to annual service fees and transaction fees, regulators issue **fin**es and **penalties**. Fines are also known as civil penalties or penalty infringement notices (PINs). Penalties come from prosecutions under National Law. Fines and penalties are out of

³ Part 10, 220, 1 (e)

scope for this paper because they were recently increased significantly under amendments to the National Law.

Recent updates to fees

- 3.11. In 2023, Education Ministers Meeting (EMM) agreed to the first structural fee increase since 2012, to be implemented via amendments to the National Regulations.
- 3.12. Increases to annual service fees and other routine fees such as applications for service approval have been phased over three years (5% in 2023–24, then 10% in each of 2024–25 and 2025–26). The increases are additional to annual indexation.
- 3.13. Further, a new “extra-large” category for services with more than 101 licensed places for centre-based care services and more than 60 educators for family day care was created for annual and application fees. The fee was set at 25% above the large category to reflect higher regulatory effort.
- 3.14. Separately, two application fees charged by ACECQA, for a review by the ratings panel and assessment of a tertiary education provider’s course to be included on the list of qualifications approved by ACECQA under the NQF, have increased on the same timeframe (6% in 2023–24, then 12% in each of 2024–25 and 2025–26).
- 3.15. Finally, a fee was introduced for applications for amendment to service approval, which was previously free of charge.

Government directions

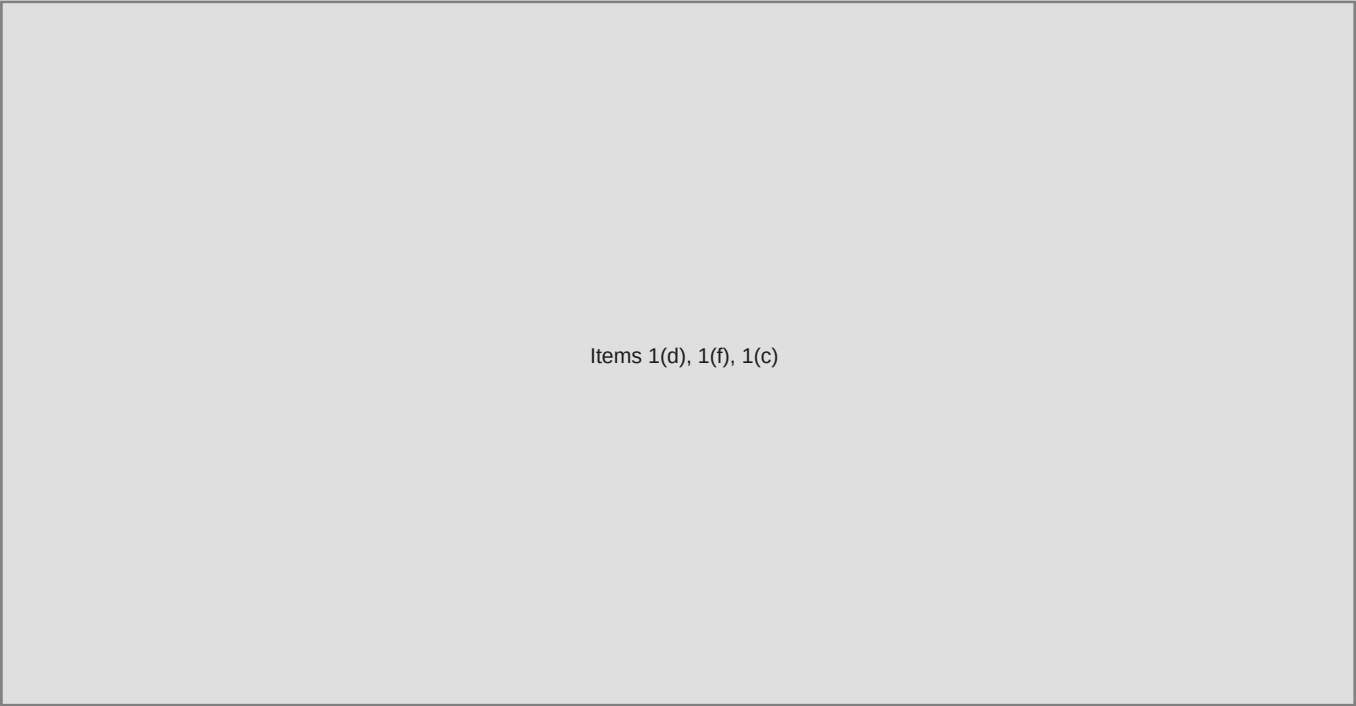
- 3.16. [redacted] Items 1(f), 1(c) a report back on: *“increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity”*.
- 3.17. In its August 2025 communique, EMM announced a range of measures to strengthen safety and quality in ECEC settings. The measures included tripling fines under the National Law and National Regulations and expanding the use of Penalty Infringement Notices (PINS) to a greater range of offences. These measures were designed to strengthen incentives to provide a safe environment, and in general penalties are not a suitable mechanism for cost recovery due to the risk of creating perverse incentives.
- 3.18. Separate to the national process, in October 2025 the New South Wales Government passed legislation significantly increasing penalties for ECEC providers beyond the levels agreed by EMM as part of broader reforms to enhance regulation of ECEC.

Implementation pathways

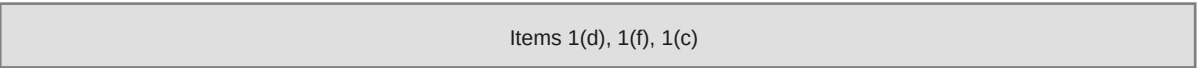
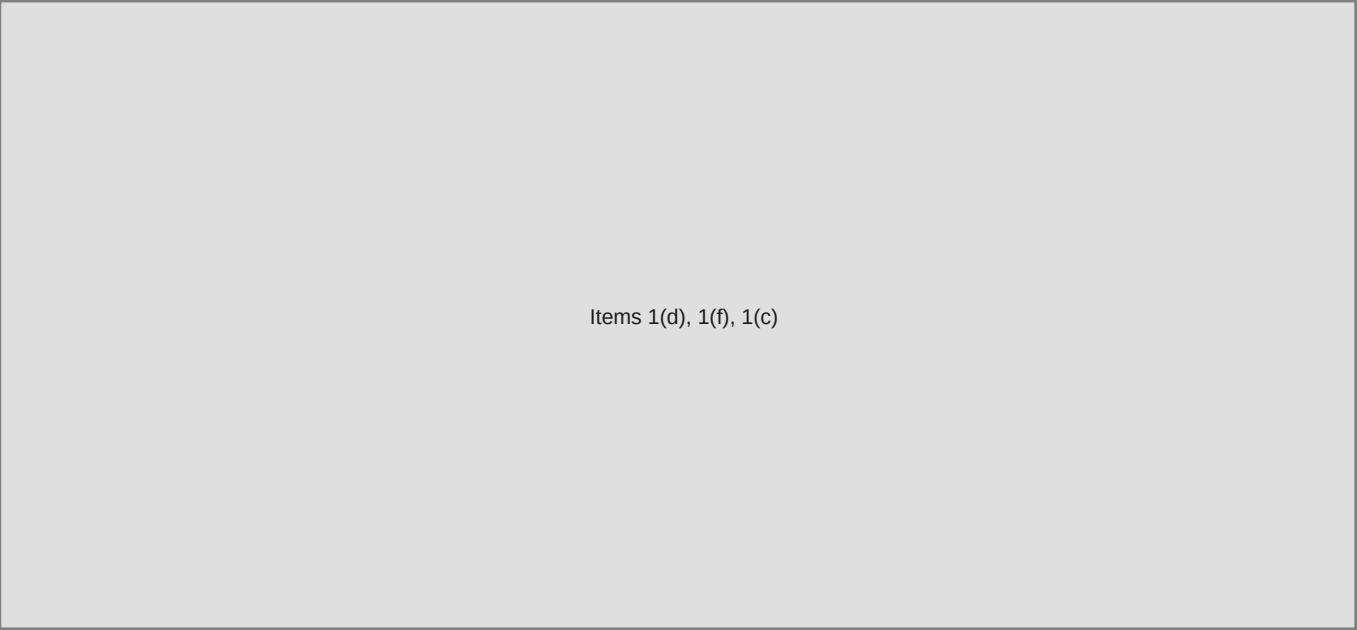
Authority under National Law

- 3.19. Section 301 of the National Law provides a broad regulation-making power, including authority to:
 - 3.19.1. prescribe “fees (including application fees and annual fees) for approvals and other things done under this Law” (s 301(3)(a)),
 - 3.19.2. apply indexation to fees (s 301(3)(b)),

- 3.19.3. differentiate requirements “according to differences in time, place (including jurisdiction) or circumstances” (s 301(4)(b)),
- 3.19.4. differentiate requirements “according to the type or class of education and care service” (s 301(4)(c)), and
- 3.19.5. “exempt any education and care service or any type or class of education and care service from complying with all or any of the regulations” (s 301(4)(d)).



Process for a regulatory change



Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

4. Key Issues

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Pages 157 through 194 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform

Draft minutes of meeting – Item 1(f) 2025

Item number	2.0
Purpose	Confirm minutes of meeting – Item 1(f) 2025
Raised by	Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG) Secretariat
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendations	
Attachments	Nil
Additional Issues to note	Nil

Please complete the following section:

Please indicate which agencies and non-government organisations can receive a copy of the paper (strike through those that cannot receive the paper):

ACECQA

CSRG Meeting Attendance

Members		
Jurisdiction	Representative	Method
QLD Department of Education (co-Chair)	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
Australian Government Department of Education (co-Chair)		Online
ACT Education Directorate		Online
NSW Department of Education		Online
NT Department of Education		Online
SA Office for Early Childhood Development		Online
TAS Department for Education, Children & Young People		Online
VIC Department of Education		Online
WA Department of Communities		Online
Jurisdiction	Apology	Proxy
ACT Education Directorate	Section 74 - not relevant	
QLD Department of Education (co-Chair)		
SA Office for Early Childhood Development		
WA Department of Communities		

Other Attendees		
Jurisdiction	Representatives	Method
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
ACT Education Directorate		Online

Australian Government Department of Education	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC)	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
NSW Department of Education	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
NT Department of Education		Online
QLD Department of Education		Online
SA Office for Early Childhood Development		Online
TAS Department for Education, Children & Young People		Online
VIC Department of Education		Online
WA Department of Communities		Online
Jurisdiction to be determined	Items 3(a), 3(b)	Online
Guests		
Nous Group	Items 3(a), 3(b)	Online

Section 74 - not relevant

1. ECEC regulator fee reform – Items 1(f), 1(c) leads

Items 1(f), 1(c) a policy options paper still under development. This paper will seek Ministers endorsement of an increase to annual service

fees that can be rapidly implemented via a change to National Regulations, potentially before 1 July 2026.

Members discussed types of fees that were proposed to be included, the need for consideration of impacts on not-for-profit services and timeframes for progression.

Decision:

CSRG38-D2	CSRG members generally supported the intent of Paper 1 pending provision of full policy options paper from Items 1(c) Items 1(f), 1(c)
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Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 200 through 207 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Tranche 2 Policy Development

Policy Option Paper Overview

Policy option paper	1
Policy option paper title	ECEC regulator fee reform
Policy leads	Items 1(c)
Description	The regulator fee reform paper covers: - the problem statement and key objectives - implementation pathways, including regulatory and legislative requirements, and impact analysis and consultation requirements - options available and assessment of those options against key criteria - modelling of revenue generation and impacts on the sector, and - a recommendation of a preferred option.
Recommendation	It is recommended Items 1(f), 1(c) - An increase to fees that can be rapidly implemented via a change to National Regulations before 1 July 2026, and Items 1(f), 1(c)

What are we seeking at Education Ministers Meeting (20 February 2026)?

- Ministers to endorse an increase to fees that can be rapidly implemented via a change to National Regulations before 1 July 2026.

- Items 1(f), 1(c)

Rationale

- Items 1(f), 1(c)

 a report back on: *“increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity”*.
- Fees to establish and operate early childhood services are very low when compared to other similar sectors, and not consistent with the regulatory costs to support safe and high quality service provision, or the policy objectives of governments.
- This work aims to improve cost recovery, incentivise good outcomes, maintain service supply and availability, and minimise impacts on families and service quality.
- Changes to fees should be developed in line with the *Commonwealth Charging Policy Principles*. These principles and their application in the ECEC context include:
 - Transparency: Fees should be clearly published, including the basis for changes in fees, e.g. indexation.
 - Efficiency: Fees should be paid by the services that benefit from/generate the most regulatory cost; fees should not be set too low or too high.
 - Performance: Fees should incentivise positive market behaviours and be aligned to risks that regulators manage.
 - Equity: Fees should be proportionate to regulatory cost and not unfairly impact the viability of services.
 - Simplicity: Fees should not be overly complex and national consistency should be maintained.
 - Consistency: Changes to fees should create incentives that align to national ECEC policy goals.

- Items 1(f), 1(c)
-

Regulatory impact analysis

-
-

Items 1(f), 1(c)

Legal advice

- Section 301 of the National Law provides a broad regulation-making power, including authority to:
 - prescribe “fees (including application fees and annual fees) for approvals and other things done under this Law” (s 301(3)(a));
 - apply indexation to fees (s 301(3)(b));
 - differentiate requirements “according to differences in time, place (including jurisdiction) or circumstances” (s 301(4)(b));
 - differentiate requirements “according to the type or class of education and care service” (s 301(4)(c)); and
 - “exempt any education and care service or any type or class of education and care service from complying with all or any of the regulations” (s 301(4)(d)).

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Proposed next steps

-
-

Items 1(f), 1(c)

**Paper &
lead writer
jurisdiction
/s**

Options

**Proposed progression
pathway by drafters**

**NSW position on
progression pathway**

**Redline key issue(s)
from NSW that would
impact progression
pathways**

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d) & 1(f)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 213 through 227 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

National Child Safety Reform

Annotated Agenda 9:00am – 12:00 pm (QLD Time)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 3.0 (9:05 am)	Title: Tranche 2 policy development • Policy option paper overviews • Endorsement pathway for February EMM		
Led by: Co-Chair QLD Government		Type: Papers For Agreement	Time: 100 mins
Summary of Item	Item 3.0 - Tranche 2 policy development.docx		
	Section 74 - not relevant		
	Policy Paper Overview -1. Regulator fees.docx		
	Section 74 - not relevant		
Section 74 - not relevant			

Pages 231 through 233 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant	
Items 1(f), 1(c)	

Items 1(f), 1(c)	
Section 74 - not relevant	

Pages 236 through 259 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

National Child Safety Reform Group

Summary of Tranche 2 policy option papers and decisions / actions from CSRG meeting Items 1(f), 1(c) **2025** (NB. Includes updates to pathway provided by lead)

Policy paper	Initiative	Lead	Pathway	Summary of CSRG decision / action
1	ECEC regulator fee reform	Item 1(c)	Items 1(f), 1(c)	General support of the intent of paper pending provision of full policy options paper from Items 1(c) Items 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant				

Pages 261 through 262 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

National Child Safety Reform Group

Summary of Tranche 2 policy option papers and decisions / actions from CSRG meeting Items 1(f), 1(c) 2025 (NB. Includes updates to pathway provided by lead)

Policy paper	Initiative	Lead	Pathway	Summary of CSRG decision / action
1	ECEC regulator fee reform	Item 1(c)	Items 1(f), 1(c)	General support of the intent of paper pending provision of full policy options paper from Item 1(c) Items 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant				

Pages 264 through 272 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant

CSRG Tranche 2 policy papers

NSW Positions

NSW ELC, ECO

January 2026



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OFFICIAL

ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

1



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Paper 1

National ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

Problem Statement

1. At the Items 1(f), 1(c) a report back on: *"increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity"*.
2. Fees to establish and operate early childhood services are very low when compared to other similar sectors, and not consistent with the regulatory costs to support safe and high-quality service provision, or the policy objectives of governments.
3. This work aims to improve cost recovery, incentivise good outcomes, maintain service supply and availability, and minimise impacts on families and service quality.
4. Changes to fees should be developed in line with the *Commonwealth Charging Policy Principles*.

Please note this paper has been identified as a policy options paper proposed to progress in Tranche 2 legislative amendments.

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Paper 1

National ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

Options

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Paper 1

National ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

Options

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

Policy Option Paper 1:
Education and care regulator fee reform

Purpose

1. This paper recommends an increase to annual service fees and application fees to send a stronger child safety signal to the sector, while also improving partial cost recovery for increased regulatory activity. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Recommendations

2. Approve recommendations to EMM as per paragraph 3:
3. It is recommended that Education Ministers:
- a. **Agree** to an increase to annual service fees and application fees to send a stronger child safety signal to the sector, while also increasing partial cost recovery to fund growing expectations of regulatory activity, as detailed below:
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
 - b.
 - c. **Approve** these changes being implemented immediately, for application on 1 July 2026 for the financial year 2026-27 onwards.
 - d.
 - e. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform Group

Policy Options Paper

Education and care regulator fee reform

Key issues

Case for change

4. At th Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c) a report-back: "increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity".
5. This request is in the context of:
- a. A spotlight on child safety issues and significantly higher community expectations of regulatory activity.
 - b. Increasing complexity of regulating early childhood education and care, including new National Law provisions taking effect in 2026.
 - c. Significant sector growth, and in particular growth in the number of for-profit providers (which tend to be associated with higher regulatory costs, and as well have high capacity to pay regulatory fees relative to other providers).
6. Fees to establish and operate early childhood services are very low when compared to similar sectors. There is opportunity to increase fees so that they send a clearer, stronger child safety signal to services, and make a larger contribution to the costs of regulating the sector, better supporting safe and high-quality service provision.

7.

8.

9.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Objective of increasing fees

10. This work aims to:
- a. Send a strong child safety signal to services by making clearer to them the regulatory costs associated with their operation.
 - b. Recover more of the costs of regulation: Fees paid by services deliver a higher rate of partial recovery of actual regulatory costs.
 - c. Maintain service supply and viability: The supply of early childhood education and care places and the viability of existing services are preserved, and fees take into account operational complexity.

Paper prepared by: Item 1(c)
Ref: Item 1(c)

Page | 2

Version 6: Item 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

- d. Minimise pass through and quality impacts: Affordability impacts of passing on increased regulatory fees to families are minimised and service quality is preserved.
11. Charging higher fees is economically efficient, particularly from those services that generate the bulk of regulatory costs.
12. This approach strengthens regulatory capacity and enhances efficiency by ensuring that the entities creating the greatest compliance burden bear a proportionate share of the costs.

Recommended change to fees

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Ref Item 1(c)

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Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Budget Implications

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Next Steps

26. Items 1(f), 1(c)

27.

28.

Consultation

29. Jurisdictions have been consulted on this paper and work. Feedback is summarised in Attachment B.

30. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Ref: Item 1(c)

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National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

31. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

32.

Background

Current fee settings and structure

33. The National Regulations set the fees for children's education and care services regulated under the National Quality Framework.
34. Power to set fees in the National Regulations is in the National Law. The Education Ministers Meeting (EMM) is responsible for approving the fee structure.
35. Fees are scheduled and invoiced by the Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) and paid directly to state and territory Regulatory Authorities. Fees are indexed annually each financial year.
36. There are two types of fees provided for in the National Regulations—annual service fees and application fees:
- a. Annual service fees are paid by all services and are set according to care type and service size category. Annual service fees currently range from \$319 (small services) to \$802 (extra large services) and recover only a small part of the cost of many functions and activities performed by the regulatory authorities.
 - b. Application fees apply to specific applications and are payable when the application is made. For example, fees apply to applications for provider approval, service approval, temporary waivers and service waivers, and transfers of service approvals. Application fees range from \$133 to \$1,855 (the latter applies only to relatively rare 'second tier review' processes) as set out in Table 1 below.
37. Separate to service fees and application fees in the National Regulations, there are fines and other penalties for non-compliance with the National Law. These measures are not fees, are out of scope for this paper and were recently increased significantly via amendments to the National Law and the National Regulations.

Table 3: Early childhood education and care annual service fees 2025–2026

Service size	Centre-based care	Family day care	Fee amount
--------------	-------------------	-----------------	------------

National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

	(places)	(educators)	
Small	<24	<5	\$319
Medium	24-80	5-20	\$482
Large	81-100	21-60	\$641
Extra-large	>100	>60	\$802

Source: ACECQA, Indexed fees 2025-2026, available at: www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/applications/indexation-of-fees/indexed-fees-2025-2026

Current state

38
39
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

40. The Australian Competition and Consumer (ACCC) found for-profit services pay lower wages and have higher staff turnover on average.⁴ Many for-profit providers focus on operating at scale and minimising educator ratios. Together, this has resulted in consistently lower quality care and an increasing number of child safety-related incidents⁵.

41
42
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

⁴ ACCC - Childcare inquiry - final report (2023). ACCC Childcare inquiry – September interim report (2023).
⁵ Note: On incidents and breaches, authors only had access to Victorian data on this matter at the time of drafting. and are keen to capture national data to clearly evidence this claim.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Ref: Item 1(c)

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Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

Attachment B: Implementation Pathway

Implementation pathway for changes to fees

The Education and Care Services National Law (the National Law) provides a broad regulation-making power to prescribe fees and differentiate fees according to the type or class of service.

Any change to how the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations) provide for fees for approvals and other things done under the National Law requires a sufficient head of power in the Law.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Authority under National Law

Fees can be set under the National Regulations where there is a specific, operative head of power to levy fees in the National Law. Section 301 of the National Law provides a broad regulation-making power, including authority to:

- prescribe “fees (including application fees and annual fees) for approvals and other things done under this Law” (s 301(3)(a)),
- apply indexation to fees (s 301(3)(b)),
- differentiate requirements “according to differences in time, place (including jurisdiction) or circumstances” (s 301(4)(b)),
- differentiate requirements “according to the type or class of education and care service” (s 301(4)(c)), and
- “exempt any education and care service or any type or class of education and care service from complying with all or any of the regulations” (s 301(4)(d)).

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Attachment C: Jurisdiction Feedback

Feedback from jurisdictions on this paper

Feedback has been received from almost all states and territories, and the Australian Government. The authors have sought to reflect that feedback wherever possible.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Paper prepared by: Item 1(c)

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Version 6: Item 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform Group
Policy Options Paper
Education and care regulator fee reform

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Paper prepared by: Item 1(c)
Ref: Item 1(c)

Page | 14

Version 6: Item 1(c)

Pages 347 through 348 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

From: Diana Ragghianti
Sent: Thursday, 22 January 2026 8:45 AM
To: Jennifer Li; Laura McKendry
Cc: Regulatory Policy
Subject: FW: CSRG wrap up

FYI

Diana Ragghianti
Director, Child Safety Policy
Reform & Insights | Early Childhood Outcomes Division

Section 74 - not relevant diana.ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

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Education



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From: Kristian Holz <Kristian.Holz@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 21 January 2026 9:13 PM
To: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>; Taryn Dilly <Taryn.Dilly@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>
Cc: Mark Barraket (Mark Barraket) <Mark.Barraket@det.nsw.edu.au>; Cassandra May <Cassandra.May9@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Nicholas Backo <Nicholas.Backo@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Laura Dawson (Laura Dawson) <Laura.Dawson17@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Diana Ragghianti <Diana.Ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au>
Subject: Re: CSRG wrap up

Thanks Amy and Taryn for the detailed update and representations today - also to our teams and their preparation and support.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Regards, Kristian

On 21 Jan 2026, at 5:48 pm, Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au> wrote:

Hi Kristian and Mark,

CSRG went well today. We will receive a document outlining all actions later on today or early tomorrow. In the meantime we are sending through some highlights.

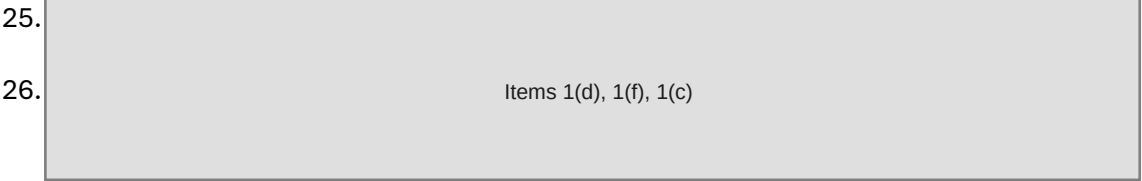
Section 74 - not relevant



Section 74 - not relevant

Policy paper – Fee reform

24. Further work happening on recs to EMM



26. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

27. Recs will come back to CSRG for response ideally by tomorrow

Amy and Taryn

Amy Birungi

Director Cross-Government and Partnerships

T 7814 2684 | M Section 74 - not relevant

| amy.birungi@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

EA: Tia Tzimoulas

tia.tzimoulas@det.nsw.edu.au

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National Child Safety Reform

Annotated Agenda 9:00am – 4:00 pm (QLD Time)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 3.0 (9:15 am)	Title: Tranche 2 policy development Policy option papers, 10 minutes each		
	Section 74 - not relevant		
Led by: Jurisdictional leads		Type: Papers For Decision	Time: 75 mins

Summary of Item	For CSRG endorsement of preferred option/s in each policy options paper for progression to AECG 1(d), 1(e) and FMM (20 Feb).
	Jurisdictional items leads expected to talk to their paper/s. Item 3.0 Tranche 2 Policy Development (Policy Option Papers).docx

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Key outcome

e sought	Section 74 - not relevant Paper 1: Regulator Fee Reform • • Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c) Section 74 - not relevant
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Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant	
Fees	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 371 through 389 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 10.0 (3:45 pm)	Title: Meeting outcomes and next steps		
Led by: all		Type: Verbal	Time: 10 mins
Section 74 - not relevant			

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 392 through 394 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

National Child Safety Reform

Draft minutes of meeting – Item 1(c) 2026

Item number	2.0
Purpose	Confirm minutes of meeting – Item 1(c)
Raised by	Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG) Secretariat
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendations	
Attachments	Nil
Additional Issues to note	Nil

Please complete the following section:

Please indicate which agencies and non-government organisations can receive a copy of the paper (strike through those that cannot receive the paper):

ACECQA

CSRG Meeting Attendance

Members		
Jurisdiction	Representative	Method
QLD Department of Education (co-Chair)	Section 74 - not relevant	In person
Australian Government Department of Education (co-Chair)		In person
ACT Education Directorate		In person
NSW Department of Education		In person
NT Department of Education		In person
SA Office for Early Childhood Development		In person
TAS Department for Education, Children & Young People		In person
VIC Department of Education		In person
WA Department of Communities		In person
NATSIEC	Section 74 - not relevant	In person
Member Apologies		
Jurisdiction	Apology	Proxy
ACT Education Directorate	Section 74 - not relevant	
VIC Department of Education		
WA Department of Communities		
Other Attendees		
Jurisdiction	Representatives	Method
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)	Section 74 - not relevant	In person
		Online

ACT Education Directorate	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
Australian Government Department of Education		Online
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Corporation (NATSIEC)	Section 74 - not relevant	In person
NSW Department of Education	Section 74 - not relevant	In person
		Online
		Online
		In person
NT Department of Education	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
QLD Department of Education		Online

SA Education Standards Board	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
SA Office for Early Childhood Development		Online
TAS Department for Education, Children & Young People		In person
		Online
		In person
VIC Department of Education	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
WA Department of Communities		Online
Guests		
Australian Centre for Child Protection	Section 74 - not relevant	Online
Nous Group		Online

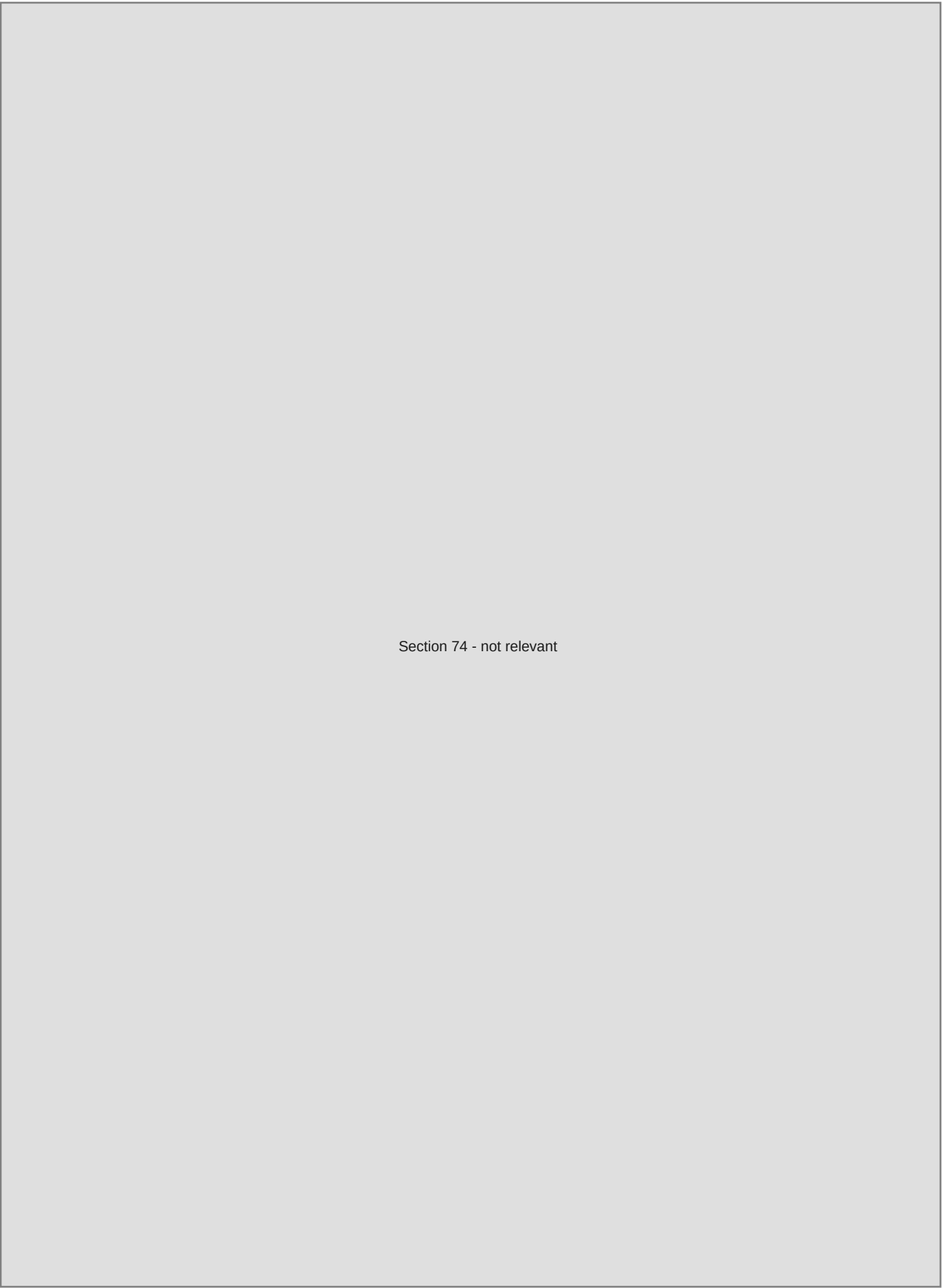
Section 74 - not relevant

Item 3.0: Tranche 2 policy development

Section 74 - not relevant

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Section 74 - not relevant



Section 74 - not relevant

1. ECEC regulator fee reform –

Item 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

to address fee increases in annual fees rather than service fees.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Differentiation between for profit and not for profit services was discussed.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

The co-Chair (Australian Government) summarised discussion and requested the policy option paper is revised to note that fees are currently low compared to other sectors;

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Actions:

CSRG39-A8	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
CSRG39-A9	

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 403 through 413 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant

From: Diana Ragghianti
Sent: Friday, 23 January 2026 11:19 AM
To: Secretariat, CSRG
Cc: Amy Birungi; Cassandra May; Taryn Dilly
Subject: RE: For urgent CSRG member review and endorsement: Revised ECEC regulator fee recommendations

Hi Team,

Please see response from NSW as follows:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Many thanks,
Di

Diana Ragghianti
Director, Child Safety Policy
Reform & Insights | Early Childhood Outcomes Division

Section 74 - not relevant diana.ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

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Education



I recognise the Ongoing Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live. I pay my respect to Elders past and present as ongoing teachers of knowledge, songlines and stories. I will work to ensure every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learner in NSW achieves their potential through education.

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From: Secretariat, CSG [redacted]@qed.qld.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 22 January 2026 4:36 PM

To: [redacted]@education.nt.gov.au>; [redacted]@det.nsw.edu.au>;
[redacted]@communities.wa.gov.au>; [redacted]@sa.gov.au>; [redacted]
[redacted]@education.vic.gov.au>; [redacted]education.gov.au>; [redacted]
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Cc: [redacted]@acecqa.gov.au>; [redacted]@act.gov.au>; [redacted]
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decyp.tas.gov.au>; TAS National Meetings

Section 74 - not relevant

@decyp.tas.gov.au>; VIC Intergovernmental Relations

Section 74 - not relevant

@education.vic.gov.au>;

Section 74 - not relevant

@communities.wa.gov.au>; WA Early

Childhood Enquiries

Section 74 - not relevant

@education.wa.edu.au>; WA EC Legislation Team

Section 74 - not relevant

@communities.wa.gov.au>;

Section 74 - not relevant

@decyp.tas.gov.au>;

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

@sa.gov.au>;

Section 74 - not relevant

@acecqa.gov.au>

Subject: For urgent CSRG member review and endorsement: Revised ECEC regulator fee recommendations
Importance: High

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Dear CSRG members,

Further to discussion at yesterday's CSRG meeting regarding ECEC regulator fees, please see attached, for your urgent review and endorsement, a revised set of recommendations for inclusion in the AESOC/EMM paper.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Please provide your endorsement and feedback to the Secretariat [@qed.qld.gov.au](#) by **COB today Thursday 22 January 2026**.

Kind regards,
Kristina Novak
Project Officer

CSRG Secretariat Project Team
QLD Department of Education

Es [@qed.qld.gov.au](#)

P: Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

I acknowledge the **Traditional Custodians** of this land, waterways and seas. I pay my respects to their ancestors and Elders of the past and present, and their continued determination to keep culture alive and strong.

National Child Safety Reform Group

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Pages 418 through 421 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

From: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>
Sent: Thursday, 22 January 2026 4:54 PM
To: Kristian Holz <Kristian.Holz@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Cassandra May <Cassandra.May9@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Nicholas Backo <Nicholas.Backo@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Laura Dawson (Laura Dawson) <Laura.Dawson17@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Diana Ragghianti <Diana.Ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au>
Subject: For urgent CSG member review and endorsement: Revised ECEC regulator fee recommendations
Importance: High

Hi all

See below request for feedback on updates recs to do with fee reform. Only just received and deadline is COB

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Amy

Amy Birungi
Director Cross-Government and Partnerships
T 7814 2684 | M Section 74 - not relevant
| amy.birungi@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

EA: Tia Tzimoulas
tia.tzimoulas@det.nsw.edu.au

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From: Secretariat, CSG Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@qed.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 22 January 2026 4:36 PM
To: Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@education.nt.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@det.nsw.edu.au>; Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@education.vic.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@sa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@education.wa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@education.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant <secretariat@act.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant @qed.qld.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant @decyp.tas.gov.au>
 Cc: Section 74 - not relevant @acecqa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
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 <PolicyDesign.EarlyChildhood@qed.qld.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 <Rachael.Gumbys@sa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant @education.vic.gov.au>;
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 Section 74 - not relevant @sa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant cecqa.gov.au>

Subject: For urgent CSRG member review and endorsement: Revised ECEC regulator fee recommendations

Importance: High

[External Email] This email was sent from outside the NSW Department of Education. Be cautious, particularly with links and attachments.

Dear CSRG members,

Further to discussion at yesterday's CSRG meeting regarding ECEC regulator fees, please see attached, for your urgent review and endorsement, a revised set of recommendations for inclusion in the AESOC/EMM paper.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Please provide your endorsement and feedback to the Secretariat

Section 74 - not relevant [\[REDACTED\]@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto: [REDACTED]@qed.qld.gov.au) by **COB today Thursday 22 January 2026.**

Kind regards,
Kristina Novak
Project Officer

CSRG Secretariat Project Team
QLD Department of Education

E: Section 74 - not relevant [\[REDACTED\]@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto: [REDACTED]@qed.qld.gov.au)

P: Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, waterways and seas. I pay my respects to their ancestors and Elders of the past and present, and their continued determination to keep culture alive and strong.

National Child Safety Reform Group

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Page 427 redacted for the following reason:

Section 74 - not relevant

Jurisdiction	Document	Reference (page/section)	Comment/requested update	Treatment/action
Section 74 - not relevant				
Item 1(c)	AESOC/EMM paper	f. iii.	Items 1(f), 1(c)	actioned
iii. Increases to licensing fees – further work on how this will be implemented, including differentiation according to provider type and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity,				
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)				
Section 74 - not relevant				

Pages 429 through 433 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Jurisdiction	Document	Reference (page/section)	Comment/requested update	Treatment/action
Item 1(c)	Workplan - detailed		Note jurisdiction leads requires further review. As outlined above suggest these are highlighted AS TBC for resolution in parallel with AESOC consideration. Paper fii and fiii: Section 74 - not relevant f.iii: Increases to licensing fees	Section 74 - not relevant Increase to licensing fees: Revised to Item 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant				

Section 74 - not relevant

CSRG Tranche 2 policy papers

NSW Positions

NSW ELC, ECO

January 2026



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Contents

Key to Options:

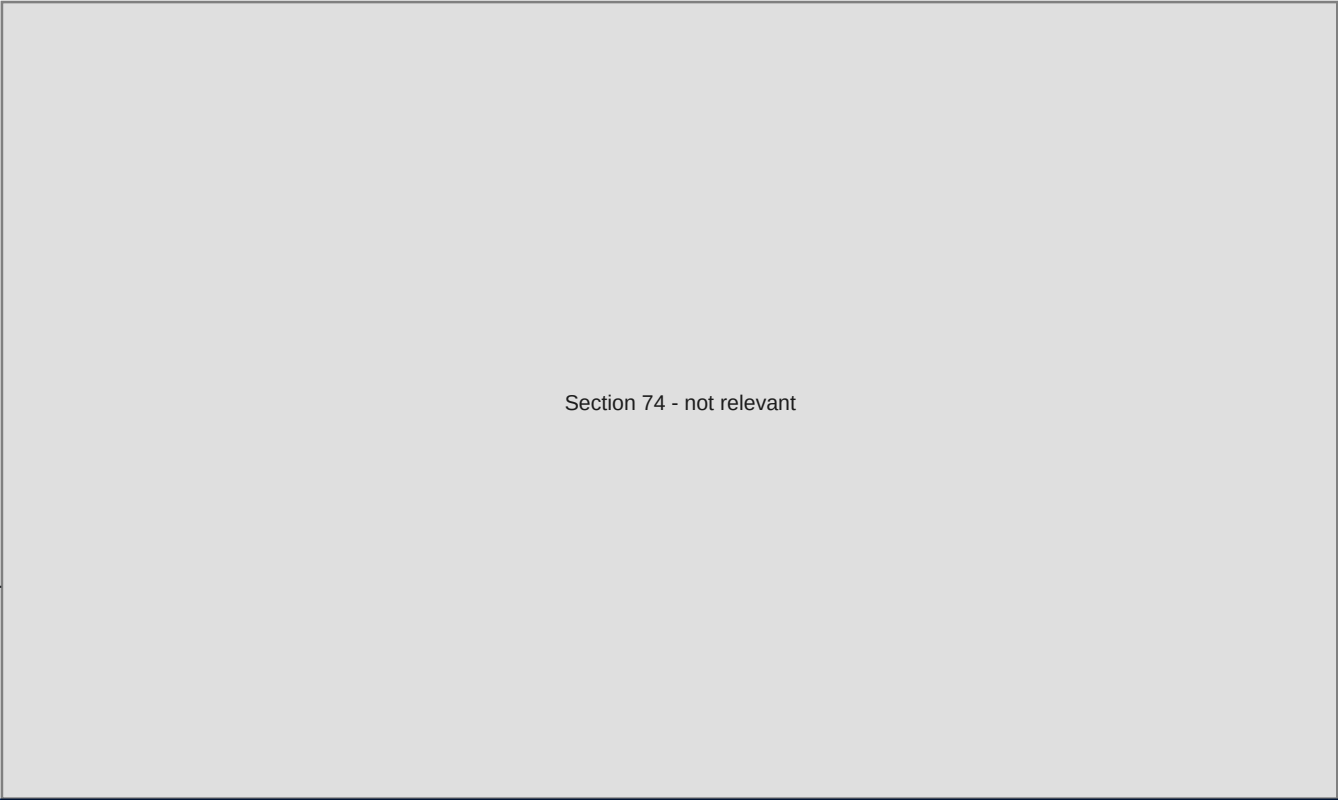
CSRG to progress

CSRG to progress (with qualifiers/work to be done)

CSRG to not progress

NSW different view with CSRG

Slide Title	Slide Number
Paper 1 - Regulator Fees	3
Paper 2 -	8
Paper 3 -	13
Paper 4 -	17
Paper 5 -	21
Paper 6 -	25
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Paper 8 -	33
Paper 9 -	37
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Paper 14	54



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ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

1



OFFICIAL

Paper 1

National ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

Problem Statement

1. At th Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c) a report back on: *“increases to provider fees – officials are progressing work to provide advice on fee increases including differentiation by provider type, size and care type, and how funds could be used to enhance regulatory activity”*.
2. Fees to establish and operate early childhood services are very low when compared to other similar sectors, and not consistent with the regulatory costs to support safe and high-quality service provision, or the policy objectives of governments.
3. This work aims to improve cost recovery, incentivise good outcomes, maintain service supply and availability, and minimise impacts on families and service quality.
4. Changes to fees should be developed in line with the *Commonwealth Charging Policy Principles*.

Please note this paper has been identified as a policy options paper proposed to progress in Tranche 2 legislative amendments.

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Paper 1

National ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

Options

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Page 441 redacted for the following reason:

Section 74 - not relevant



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Paper 1

National ECEC Regulator Fee Reform

Options

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

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Pages 443 through 498 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant

From: ECO Correspondence
Sent: Tuesday, 27 January 2026 12:37 PM
To: Diana Ragghianti
Cc: ECO Correspondence; Reform and Insights; Amy Birungi; Kristian Holz
Subject: FW: [For approval] DUE ASAP 27/01: For CSGR member redline feedback by 12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026: EMM National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper and attachments

Attachments:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Attachment 6 - Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG) proposed policy options summary.docx; Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

EMM

Paper - National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality.docx

Hi Di

Mark has approved the below. For your action and next steps.

Thanks,
Jasmen

Jasmen Dang
Executive Coordinator, Office of the Deputy Secretary | Early Childhood Outcomes
Jasmen.Dang1@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au



We recognise the Ongoing Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live. We pay respect to Elders past and present as ongoing teachers of knowledge, songlines and stories. We strive to ensure every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learner in NSW achieves their potential through education.

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From: Mark Barraket (Mark Barraket) <Mark.Barraket@det.nsw.edu.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 27 January 2026 12:34 PM
To: ECO Correspondence <ECOCorro@det.nsw.edu.au>
Subject: FW: [For approval] DUE ASAP 27/01: For CSGR member redline feedback by 12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026: EMM National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper and attachments
Importance: High

Approved.

m

Mark Barraket

Deputy Secretary | Early Childhood Outcomes

NSW Department of Education

E mark.barraket@det.nsw.edu.au | W www.education.nsw.gov.au

My Executive Assistant is Adrienne Severi (Adrienne.Severi2@det.nsw.edu.au)

Section 74 - not relevant



Education

I acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay my respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging.

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From: ECO Correspondence <ECOCorro@det.nsw.edu.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 27 January 2026 12:29 PM

To: Mark Barraket (Mark Barraket) <Mark.Barraket@det.nsw.edu.au>

Cc: ECO Correspondence <ECOCorro@det.nsw.edu.au>

Subject: [For approval] DUE ASAP 27/01: For CSRG member redline feedback by 12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026: EMM National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper and attachments

Importance: High

Hi Mark

#DepSec-approval-request

Approval item title: For CSRG member redline feedback by 12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026: EMM National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper and attachments

Approved by: Amy Birungi and ELC have confirmed their support

Actions required:

- **Review/approve** the below redline feedback on the attached EMM paper.

Critical date: **ASAP today, 27 January 2026**

Link:

Proposed response as follows:

EMM Paper

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Fees

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Thanks,
Jasmen

Jasmen Dang

Executive Coordinator, Office of the Deputy Secretary | Early Childhood Outcomes

Jasmen.Dang1@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au



Education

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From: Diana Ragghianti <diana.ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 27 January 2026 12:21 PM

To: ECO Correspondence <ECOCorro@det.nsw.edu.au>

Cc: Kristian Holz <Kristian.Holz@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>; Jasmen Dang <Jasmen.Dang1@det.nsw.edu.au>

Subject: For Approval: For CSRG member redline feedback by 12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026: EMM National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper and attachments

Importance: High

Hi Team,

As advised, Mark's urgent review of the proposed redline feedback to this EMM paper is appreciated. Amy has reviewed, and ELC have confirmed their support. I have requested a slight extension with the Secretariat but am yet to hear back.

Proposed response as follows:

EMM Paper

Section 74 - not relevant

Fees

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Many thanks,
Di

Diana Ragghianti

Director, Child Safety Policy

Reform & Insights | Early Childhood Outcomes Division

Section 74 - not relevant | diana.ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

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Education



I recognise the Ongoing Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live. I pay my respect to Elders past and present as ongoing teachers of knowledge, songlines and stories. I will work to ensure every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learner in NSW achieves their potential through education.

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From: [redacted] qed.qld.gov.au **On Behalf Of** Secretariat, CSRG

Sent: Friday, 23 January 2026 5:06 PM

To: [redacted] education.nt.gov.au; [redacted] det.nsw.edu.au;
[redacted] @communities.wa.gov.au; [redacted] @sa.gov.au; [redacted]
[redacted] @education.vic.gov.au; [redacted] education.gov.au; [redacted]
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[redacted] decyp.tas.gov.au

Cc: [redacted] @acecqa.gov.au; [redacted] @act.gov.au; [redacted]
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 Section 74 - not relevant @education.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant @qed.qld.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant @qed.qld.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant det.nsw.edu.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant education.nt.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant act.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant @det.nsw.edu.au>; Section 74 - not relevant @decyp.tas.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant @decyp.tas.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 <Intergov.EarlyChildhood@education.vic.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant communities.wa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant education.wa.edu.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant @communities.wa.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant decyp.tas.gov.au>; Section 74 - not relevant
 Section 74 - not relevant acecqa.gov.au>

Subject: For CSRG member redline feedback by 12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026: EMM National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper and attachments

Importance: High

[External Email] This email was sent from outside the NSW Department of Education. Be cautious, particularly with links and attachments.

Dear CSRG members,

Please find **attached** the updated National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality paper – **note: comment for action**, and the following attachments:

Item 1(c)

-
-
-
-
-
-

Section 74 - not relevant

- Attachment 6: Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG) proposed policy options summary – **note: appreciate confirmation of highlighted sections**

Please note CSRG member redline feedback is due by **12:00pm (AEDT) Tuesday 27 January 2026** to support progression to AESOC and EMM.

Please note an urgent OOS CSRG meeting has been scheduled for 11:30am – 12:00pm (QLD time) Tuesday 27 January 2026 to discuss the Rapid Assessment of child safe practices and next steps paper.

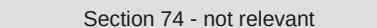
We appreciate your support and feedback within compressed timeframes.

Kind Regards,

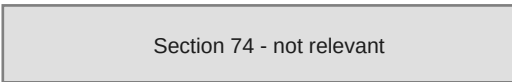
Rachael Stegemann

CSRG Secretariat Project Team

QLD Department of Education

E:  Section 74 - not relevant

P: Section 74 - not relevant

 Section 74 - not relevant

I acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, waterways and seas. I pay my respects to their ancestors and Elders of the past and present, and their continued determination to keep culture alive and strong.



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**National Actions to strengthen child safety and
quality and legislation amendments**

Item number	4A
Purpose	This paper seeks AESOC’s consideration of the attached paper and resolution of any outstanding issues prior to it proceeding to Education Ministers on 20 February 2026.
Raised By	Australian Government on behalf of the Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG)
Budget Implications	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Consultation	
Recommendation	

Please complete the following section:

Section 74 - not relevant

ACECQA

Section 74 - not relevant



MEETING
20 February 2026
Adelaide
Item 5A

National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality and legislation amendments

Item number	5A
Purpose	This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen quality and safety in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, seeks decisions on: • further activities to support implementation of National Actions and other key reforms, • Section 74 - not relevant •
Raised By	Australian Government on behalf of the CSG
Budget Implications	No
Consultation	Yes
Recommendations	Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Fees

- i. **note** fees are lower in the ECEC sector than in other comparable sectors;
- j.
- k.
- l.
- m. **agree** CSG will come back to EMM at the next meeting on further fee reforms;

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Please complete the following section:

Section 74 - not relevant

ACECQA

Section 74 - not relevant

National Actions to strengthen child safety and quality and legislation amendments

Purpose

- 1. This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen quality and safety in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. It provides an update on implementation progress of the National Actions and other key reforms, including the passage of legislation.
- 2.

Section 74 - not relevant
- 3.

Section 74 - not relevant
- 4. Finally, the paper outlines the pathway for a second tranche of reforms (Tranche 2) in a range of areas including:
 - Section 74 - not relevant
 - Section 74 - not relevant
 - Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
 - Section 74 - not relevant
 - Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Key Issues

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 511 through 512 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

ECEC fee reform

33. At the [redacted] noted work underway for provision of advice on increasing provider fees, including differentiation by provider type, size and care type. The CSRG has recommended an [redacted] increase to ECEC annual service and application fees.
34. The recommendation to increase is underpinned by several key economic and social benefits, supporting the government's central priorities for the ECEC sector:
- Fees are lower in the ECEC sector than in other comparable sectors.
 - Fees have grown 25% since 2023-24 and without further increases, annual growth will return to zero in real terms (it will revert to annual indexation in line with CPI).
 - An increase would support better recognition of the importance and value of ECEC which aligns with government reform of the ECEC sector, by sending a clear signal to the sector and community.
35. An increase to fees will support enhanced regulatory activity [redacted]
[redacted]
36. [redacted]
37. The following objectives and principles have been considered in guiding this recommendation:
- Sending a strong child safety signal to services by making clearer to them the regulatory costs associated with their operation;
 - Recovering more of the costs of regulation: Fees paid by services deliver a higher rate of partial recovery of actual regulatory costs;
 - Maintaining service supply and viability: The supply of early childhood education and care places and the viability of existing services are preserved, and fees take into account operational complexity;
 - Minimising pass through and quality impacts: Affordability impacts of passing on increased regulatory fees to families are minimised and service quality is preserved;
 - Charging higher fees is economically efficient, particularly from those services that generate the bulk of regulatory costs;
 - Strengthening regulatory capacity and enhancing efficiency by ensuring that the entities creating the greatest compliance burden bear a proportionate share of the costs.

Section 74 - not relevant

Page 514 redacted for the following reason:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Budget Implications

54. Nil

Consultation

55. All jurisdictions, NATSIEC and ACECQA were consulted in the development of this paper.

Next Steps

56. Implementation of National Actions will continue at pace with the next progress update provided at EMM’s next meeting.
57. Pending EMM agreement, the CSG will commence consultation on Tranche 2 policy work.

Background

58.

Section 74 - not relevant
59. On

Items 1(f), 1(c)

 agreed for CSG to progress a range of actions under the Workplan. Updates on these items, and potential next steps, are provided today for EMM’s consideration.

Pages 516 through 544 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG) proposed policy options summary

The table below sets out a range of policy options for consideration and has been developed to address the intent of the policy initiatives				
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)				
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)				
Policy reform area	Summary	Rationale	Proposed policy options	Timeframes for delivery
ECEC regulator fee reform	Recommendation to increase annual service fees and application fees.	An across-the-board increase of fees is proposed in recognition of the importance and value of ECEC – sending a clear signal to the sector and community.	XXX	TBD – Phased approach
Section 74 - not relevant				

Pages 546 through 553 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Pages 555 through 557 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

National Child Safety Reform

Annotated Agenda 2:00pm – 3:30 pm (QLD Time)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 559 through 567 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 5.0
(2:30 pm)

Title: AESOC / EMM papers update:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Key issues

Fees

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant	
Jurisdiction and Stakeholder Positions	On Fees
	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
	Section 74 - not relevant
Section 74 - not relevant	

Meeting Notes

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

- Recommendation on additional work

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 572 through 580 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

From: Diana Ragghianti
Sent: Friday, 6 February 2026 1:28 PM
To: Matthew McLean
Cc: Anne McClellan; Amy Birungi
Subject: AESOC 6 February - ECEC items 4a, 4b and 5 - Notes

Hi Matt,

Appreciate the opportunity to support AESOC on items related to ECEC today.

Please find notes as follows, including highlights of key actions we will need to pick up and/or monitor.

Item 4a

Section 74 - not relevant

- Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Let me know if you'd to chat any of it through.

Thanks,
Di

Diana Ragghianti

Manager, Regulatory Policy

Cross Government & Partnerships | Early Childhood Outcomes Division

Section 74 - not relevant diana.ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

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Education



I recognise the Ongoing Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live. I pay my respect to Elders past and present as ongoing teachers of knowledge, songlines and stories. I will work to ensure every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learner in NSW achieves their potential through education.

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Pages 583 through 592 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Item 1(f)

From: Jennifer Li <Jennifer.Li14@det.nsw.edu.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 10 February 2026 1:11 PM

To: Shabnam Talebi <Shabnam.Talebi@det.nsw.edu.au>; Diana Ragghianti <Diana.Ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au>

Cc: Angelique Vongsaya <Angelique.Vongsaya1@det.nsw.edu.au>; Regulatory Policy <eco.regulatorypolicy@det.nsw.edu.au>

Subject: RE: Urgent EMM Task: Template for Pre-EMM Stakeholder Consultations - due 9am Monday 6 Feb 2026

Hi Shabs,

Item 1(f)

Notes

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

- Fees – and amounts

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Kind regards,
Jen

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 595 through 597 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

From: Diana Ragghianti
Sent: Wednesday, 11 February 2026 10:56 AM
To: Jennifer Li
Subject: RE: Urgent EMM Task: Template for Pre-EMM Stakeholder Consultations - due 9am Monday 6 Feb 2026

FYI – notes from the EMM stakeholder

Items 1(d), 1(f)

Item 3 – National Actions
Fees – proposal increase to annual fees and transaction fees, recognising fees in early childhood are relatively low

Items 1(d), 1(f)

Section 74 - not relevant

Diana Ragghianti
Manager, Regulatory Policy

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Item 1(f)

From: Jennifer Li <Jennifer.Li14@det.nsw.edu.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 10 February 2026 1:11 PM

To: Shabnam Talebi <Shabnam.Talebi@det.nsw.edu.au>; Diana Ragghianti <Diana.Ragghianti1@det.nsw.edu.au>

Cc: Angelique Vongsaya <Angelique.Vongsaya1@det.nsw.edu.au>; Regulatory Policy <eco.regulatorypolicy@det.nsw.edu.au>

Subject: RE: Urgent EMM Task: Template for Pre-EMM Stakeholder Consultations - due 9am Monday 6 Feb 2026

Hi Shabs,

Item 1(f)

Notes

Section 74 - not relevant

- Fees – and amounts

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Kind regards,
Jen

Item 1(f)

Pages 601 through 605 redacted for the following reasons:

Item 1(f)
Items 1(d), 1(f)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Pages 607 through 610 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 612 through 623 redacted for the following reasons:

-
- Item 1(f), 1(c)
- Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
- Section 74 - not relevant



Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to the *Education and Care Services National Law*

Item number	5a
Purpose	This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen quality and safety in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, seeking decisions on: further activities to support the implementation of National Actions and other key reforms; Section 74 - not relevant
Raised By	Australian Government on behalf of the Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG)
Budget Implications	No
Consultation	Yes
Recommendations	Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Regulatory Fees Paid by ECEC Providers

- n. **note** that fees are lower in the ECEC sector than in other comparable sectors;

- o. **note** that regulatory fees have grown 25 per cent since 2023-24 and without further increases, annual growth will return to zero in real terms (fees are indexed annually in line with CPI);

Items 1(d), 1(c)

- q. **agree** that, in addition to recommendation 3, NSW and Victoria will increase annual service fees for implementation from 1 July 2026;
- i. 3-fold for services owned by small not-for-profit providers (fewer than 25 services) and for all standalone sessional preschool services;
- ii. 5-fold for services (other than standalone sessional preschool services) owned by small for-profit providers (fewer than 25 services);

Item 1(d), 1(c)

- iv. 10-fold for services (other than standalone sessional preschool services) owned by large for-profit providers (25 or more services);

Section 74 - not relevant

- s. **note** that in NSW, all revenue from fee increases will be paid to the NSW Early Learning Commission to support effective regulation of safety, quality and compliance in ECEC;

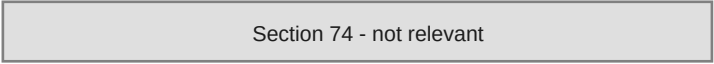
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant



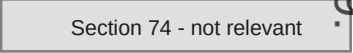
Section 74 - not relevant

Please complete the following section:



Section 74 - not relevant

ACECQA



Section 74 - not relevant

Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to the *Education and Care Services National Law*

Purpose

- 1
- This paper updates Education Ministers on national efforts to strengthen quality and safety in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. It provides an update on implementation progress of the National Actions and other key reforms, including the passage of legislation.

2

3

Section 74 - not relevant

4

- Finally, the paper outlines the pathway for a second tranche of reforms (Tranche 2) in a range of areas including

Section 74 - not relevant

service fee increases

Section 74 - not relevant

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 629 through 630 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

ECEC fee reform

34 At [redacted Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)] noted ongoing work to develop advice on increasing provider fees, including options to differentiate fees by provider type, size, and care type. This work is informed by several key economic and social factors that demonstrate the need for a revised fee structure. Current fees in the ECEC sector remain lower than those in comparable regulatory environments and are significantly below cost-recovery levels, limiting the capacity to sustain regulatory functions.

- Fees have grown by 25 per cent since 2023-24; however, without further adjustments, real growth will fall to zero due to CPI based indexation. Increasing fees would also support stronger recognition of the value and importance of ECEC, aligning with broader sector reforms and signalling the significance of regulatory responsibilities to providers and the community.

35

Section 74 - not relevant

36

[redacted Section 74 - not relevant] NSW and Victoria have determined a jurisdiction-specific approach to annual regulatory fee increases to apply from 1 July 2026. Under this approach, both jurisdictions intend to introduce differentiated fee levels based on provider type and scale. This

includes a three-fold increase for services owned by small not-for-profit providers (fewer than 25 services) and for all standalone sessional preschool services.

- Further scaling is planned for other provider categories. Services owned by small for-profit providers (fewer than 25 services) will face a five-fold increase, while those owned by large not-for-profit providers (25 or more services) Items 1(f), 1(c) The most substantial adjustment applies to services operated by large for-profit providers (25 or more services), where a ten-fold increase has been set.

- Section 74 - not relevant

37

Section 74 - not relevant

38 The following objectives and principles have been considered in guiding the above recommendations:

- sending a strong child safety signal to services by making clearer to them the regulatory costs associated with their operation;
- recovering more of the costs of regulation: fees paid by services deliver a higher rate of partial recovery of actual regulatory costs;
- maintaining service supply and viability: the supply of early childhood education and care places and the viability of existing services are preserved, and fees take into account operational complexity;
- minimising pass through and quality impacts: affordability impacts of passing on increased regulatory fees to families are minimised and service quality is preserved;
- charging higher fees is economically efficient, particularly from those services that generate the bulk of regulatory costs; and
- strengthening regulatory capacity and enhancing efficiency by ensuring that the entities creating the greatest compliance burden bear a proportionate share of the costs.

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 633 through 663 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Child Safety Reform Group (CSRG) proposed policy options summary

The table below sets out a range of policy options for consideration and has been developed to address the intent of the policy initiatives

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)				
Policy reform area	Summary	Rationale	Proposed policy options	Timeframes for delivery
ECEC regulator fee reform	Recommendation to increase regulatory fees with further increases concerning a number of categories in NSW and Victoria. Section 74 - not relevant	An across-the-board increase of fees is proposed in recognition of the importance and value of ECEC – sending a clear signal to the sector and community.	1. Regulatory: The following fee increases will apply to regulatory-related functions: • Section 74 - not relevant • NSW and Victoria will also increase annual service fees for implementation from 1 July 2026: o 3-fold for services owned by small not-for-profit providers (fewer than 25 services), and for all standalone sessional preschool services o 5-fold for services (other than standalone sessional preschool services) owned by small for-profit providers (fewer than 25 services) o Items 1(d), 1(c) o 10-fold for services (other than standalone sessional preschool services) owned by large for-profit providers (25 or more services) Section 74 - not relevant	Tranche 2 All initial fee increases listed will take effect from 1 July 2026. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Pages 665 through 672 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

OFFICIAL Sensitive - NSW Government

EMM Annotated Agenda – ECO Template

Friday 20 February, 2026
Warriappendi Secondary School, Adelaide
8:45AM – 2:00 PM (ACDT) / 9:15AM – 2:30 PM

NSW Positions on Paper Recommendations:

Agenda no.	EMM Item	NSW Positions on Paper Recommendations
5	a. Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law	NSW supports the recommendations but has comments on fee reform and national model code for recruitment.

Section 74 - not relevant

OFFICIAL Sensitive - NSW Government

Item 5 – a. Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law (Paper, AG)	
ESSENTIAL BACKGROUND	Section 74 - not relevant
NSW POSITIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS	NSW supports the recommendations but has comments on fee reform and national model code for recruitment. Items 1(d), 1(f)
KEY SPEAKING POINTS	On Fees • NSW supports the increase of fees as proposed by NSW and Victoria in recommendations p – t in the EMM paper. • The increase of fees will address the current environment where fees are lower in the ECEC sector than in other comparable sectors. This increase will also support for better recognition of the sector by the public, and will better reflect the costs of regulatory activities more closely. • The differentiated NSW and Victorian position reflects higher fees for for-profit services as they tend to have higher rates of child safety issues and are responsible for a higher proportion of regulatory costs than other services. Section 74 - not relevant
POSITIONS OF OTHER	

Item 5 – a. Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to	
JURISDICTIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS	Section 74 - not relevant <u>Fee increases</u> Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 5 – a. Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to

	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)	
KEY ISSUES	Issue 1: NSW supports the new proposed increase and structure of provider fees. Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c) - Fee reform of this nature is an important cost recovery mechanism to support the operation of the NSW Early Learning Commission. The Early Childhood Education and Care Regulation in NSW Independent Review (Wheeler Review) noted the resourcing requirements of the regulator and outlined that funding for the regulator needs be indexed to a growing sector. - Furthermore, quality is paramount to achieving the benefits of ECEC. Regulators should be adequately resourced to deliver timely assessments of service quality, take action to tackle persistently poor quality and support continuous quality improvement. Section 74 - not relevant	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)
FURTHER BACKGROUND		

Pages 677 through 683 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

Speaking points for Deputy Secretary and ED
Pre-EMM Stakeholder Consultations – Early Childhood Items

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 3: Update on National actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to the Education and Care Services National

Section 74 - not relevant

Context / Background	Issue 1: One of the priority reform areas is on an increase to provider fees		Items 1(d), 1(f)
	Items 1(d), 1(f)		
	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)		

- A fee increase would support governments' priorities for the ECEC sector, noting that currently, fees are lower in the ECEC sector than in other comparable sectors, and an increase will support better recognition of the sector and support enhanced regulatory activities.

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

SENSITIVE: NSW GOVERNMENT

Section 74 - not relevant

SENSITIVE: NSW GOVERNMENT

National Child Safety Reform

Annotated Agenda 9:30am – 11:00 am (QLD Time)

Section 74 - not relevant

Section 74 - not relevant

Item 3.0	Title: Outcomes: EMM 20 February
(9:40 am)	
Section 74 - not relevant	
Summary of Item	Section 74 - not relevant
Key outcome sought	
Key issues	Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c) The proposed annual service fee and application fee structure for NSW and VIC remained agreed to at 20 February EMM.
Jurisdiction and Stakeholder Positions	N/A (?)
Teams consulted	
Background	The 20 February EMM meeting had the following regulatory/child safety related agenda items: - Update on national actions to strengthen child safety and quality, including amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law - Seeks agreement to several decision to support implementation of National Actions and additional key reforms - Including a series of annual and (for NSW and VIC) application fee increases Section 74 - not relevant

	Section 74 - not relevant
Meeting Notes	Section 74 - not relevant Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Section 74 - not relevant

Pages 692 through 702 redacted for the following reasons:

Section 74 - not relevant

From: Julian Reichl <Julian.Reichl@education.vic.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 19 February 2026 10:22 AM
To: Amy Birungi; Isabel King
Cc: Mark Barraket (Mark Barraket); Matthew McLean
Subject: RE: Updated wording on recs

[External Email] This email was sent from outside the NSW Department of Education. Be cautious, particularly with links and attachments.

Thanks Amy and all.

@Isabel King, please see below – let's chat

Julian Reichl | Executive Director | Early Childhood Strategy

Department of Education

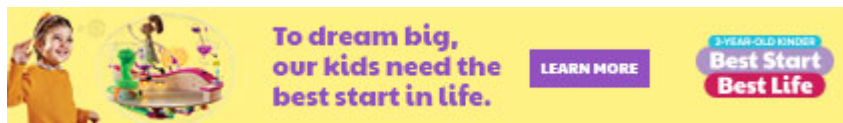
L2 200 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne VIC 3002

T: Section 74 - not relevant

E: julian.reichl@education.vic.gov.au

W: www.education.vic.gov.au

I respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay respect to the ongoing living cultures of First Peoples.



From: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>
Sent: Thursday, 19 February 2026 10:21 AM
To: Julian Reichl <Julian.Reichl@education.vic.gov.au>
Cc: Mark Barraket (Mark Barraket) <Mark.Barraket@det.nsw.edu.au>; Matthew McLean <Matthew.McLean29@det.nsw.edu.au>
Subject: RE: Updated wording on recs

Hi Julian

Thanks for the opportunity to review. Our feedback below.

Amy

Recommendation r

Section 74 - not relevant

Recommendation s

From - **note** that in NSW, all revenue from fee increases will be paid to the NSW Early Learning Commission to support effective regulation of safety, quality and compliance in ECEC; [redacted] Item 1(f)

[redacted] Item 1(f)

[redacted] Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Kind regards

Amy

Amy Birungi

Director Cross-Government and Partnerships

T 7814 2684 | M [redacted] Section 74 - not relevant

| amy.birungi@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

EA: Tia Tzimoulas

tia.tzimoulas@det.nsw.edu.au

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From: Julian Reichl <Julian.Reichl@education.vic.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 19 February 2026 9:31 AM

To: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>

Subject: RE: Updated wording on recs

[External Email] This email was sent from outside the NSW Department of Education. Be cautious, particularly with links and attachments.

Thanks amy – [redacted] Section 74 - not relevant

Julian Reichl | Executive Director | Early Childhood Strategy

Department of Education

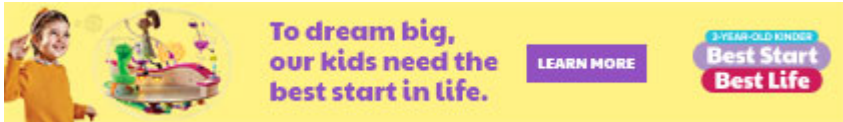
L2 200 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne VIC 3002

T: [redacted] Section 74 - not relevant

E: julian.reichl@education.vic.gov.au

W: www.education.vic.gov.au

I respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay respect to the ongoing living cultures of First Peoples.



From: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>
Sent: Thursday, 19 February 2026 9:27 AM
To: Julian Reichl <Julian.Reichl@education.vic.gov.au>
Subject: Updated wording on recs

Hi Julian

Is that what you are thinking for the recs?

Recommendation r

Section 74 - not relevant

Recommendation s

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Amy Birungi
Director Cross-Government and Partnerships
T 7814 2684 | M

Section 74 - not relevant

| amy.birungi@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

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Pages 707 through 709 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

From: Sarah Kemeny
Sent: Wednesday, 18 February 2026 12:34 PM
To: Amy Birungi; Kate Hancock (Kate Marie Hancock); Nicholas Backo; Taryn Dilly; Cassandra May
Cc: Julian Reichl; Lauren Kaerger; Cecily Jones; Caroline McInerney 2; Amy Piper; Isabel King
Subject: RE: Joint comms - fee reform

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Hi all

Please see below some slightly updated text reflecting discussions overnight.

EMM Communique

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Fees

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)	
Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)	Section 74 - not relevant
Section 74 - not relevant	These decisions are necessary to meet the increasing complexity of ensuring the safety and protection of children attending ECEC settings.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Welcome any thoughts

Cheers

Sarah

Sarah Kemeny (she/her)| Director, National Strategy and Reform | Strategy, Policy and National Reform
(I job share with Isabel King. My work days are Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday)
Strategy and Secondary School Reform Group
Department of Education
T Section 74 - not relevant
E Sarah.Kemeny@education.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at DE. I'm sending this message now because the time suits me, and I encourage you to read, respond or action this email at a time that best works for you.



Department
of Education

Strategy and Secondary School Reform



We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of country throughout Victoria and pay our respect to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

From: Sarah Kemeny

Sent: Tuesday, 17 February 2026 1:18 PM

To: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>; Kate Hancock (Kate Marie Hancock) <KateMarie.Hancock@det.nsw.edu.au>; Nicholas Backo <Nicholas.Backo@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Taryn Dilly <Taryn.Dilly@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Cassandra May <Cassandra.May9@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>

Cc: Julian Reichl <Julian.Reichl@education.vic.gov.au>; Lauren Kaerger <Lauren.Kaerger@education.vic.gov.au>; Cecily Jones <Cecily.Jones@education.vic.gov.au>; Caroline McNerney 2 <Caroline.McNerney2@education.vic.gov.au>; Amy Piper <Amy.Piper@education.vic.gov.au>; Isabel King <Isabel.King@education.vic.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Joint comms - fee reform

Apologies just adding my job-share partner [@Isabel King](#).

Sarah Kemeny (she/her)| Director, National Strategy and Reform | Strategy, Policy and National Reform

(I job share with Isabel King. My work days are Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday)

Strategy and Secondary School Reform Group

Department of Education

T Section 74 - not relevant

E Sarah.Kemeny@education.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at DE. I'm sending this message now because the time suits me, and I encourage you to read, respond or action this email at a time that best works for you.



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We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of country throughout Victoria and pay our respect to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

From: Sarah Kemeny

Sent: Tuesday, 17 February 2026 1:17 PM

To: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>; Kate Hancock (Kate Marie Hancock) <KateMarie.Hancock@det.nsw.edu.au>; Nicholas Backo <Nicholas.Backo@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>;

Taryn Dilly <Taryn.Dilly@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Cassandra May
<Cassandra.May9@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>

Cc: Julian Reichl <Julian.Reichl@education.vic.gov.au>; Lauren Kaerger <Lauren.Kaerger@education.vic.gov.au>;
Cecily Jones <Cecily.Jones@education.vic.gov.au>; Caroline McInerney 2
<Caroline.McInerney2@education.vic.gov.au>; Amy Piper <Amy.Piper@education.vic.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Joint comms - fee reform

Thanks very much Amy for connecting us.

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Cheers

Sarah

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Sarah Kemeny (she/her)| Director, National Strategy and Reform | Strategy, Policy and National Reform

(I job share with Isabel King. My work days are Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday)

Strategy and Secondary School Reform Group

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T Section 74 - not relevant

E Sarah.Kemeny@education.vic.gov.au

We work flexibly at DE. I'm sending this message now because the time suits me, and I encourage you to read, respond or action this email at a time that best works for you.



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We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of country throughout Victoria and pay our respect to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.

From: Amy Birungi <Amy.Birungi@det.nsw.edu.au>

Sent: Monday, 16 February 2026 12:34 PM

To: Sarah Kemeny <Sarah.Kemeny@education.vic.gov.au>

Cc: Kate Hancock (Kate Marie Hancock) <KateMarie.Hancock@det.nsw.edu.au>; Nicholas Backo

<Nicholas.Backo@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Taryn Dilly

<Taryn.Dilly@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>; Cassandra May

<Cassandra.May9@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Joint comms - fee reform

Hi Sarah,

Connecting you with some of my colleagues from the NSW Early Learning Commission to pick up the conversation on possible joint comms on fee reform.

Kind regards

Amy

Amy Birungi

Director Cross-Government and Partnerships

T 7814 2684 | M Section 74 - not relevant

| amy.birungi@det.nsw.edu.au | education.nsw.gov.au

EA: Tia Tzimoulas

tia.tzimoulas@det.nsw.edu.au

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Pages 715 through 717 redacted for the following reasons:

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

From: Cassandra May
Sent: Thursday, 12 February 2026 3:31 PM
To: Kristian Holz
Cc: Taryn Dilly; Amy Birungi
Subject: RE: EMM and EC regulatory fees

Thanks Kristian

Item 1(f)

- here is current draft content

Item 1(f)

Item 1(f)

Proposed early childhood education and care (ECEC) regulatory fee increases

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Currently, fees are lower in the ECEC sector than in other comparable sectors, and an increase will support better recognition of the sector and enhanced regulatory activities

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

Items 1(d), 1(f), 1(c)

From 1 July 2026, NSW and Victoria will increase annual service fees in addition to existing mechanisms to index fees annually at CPI as follows:

- 3-fold for small not-for-profit providers and all sizes of standalone sessional preschool services (e.g. including community and public preschools)
- 5-fold for small for-profit providers
- Items 1(d), 1(c)
- 10-fold for large for-profit providers.

Section 74 - not relevant

NSW has been forthright in its support for increased fees. Fee reform of this nature is an important cost recovery mechanism to support the operation of the NSW Early Learning Commission. The Early Childhood Education and Care Regulation in NSW Independent Review (Wheeler Review) noted the resourcing requirements of the regulator; recommending the regulator be exempt from efficiency dividends.

Thanks

Cassie

Page 719 redacted for the following reason:

Items 1(d), 1(f)