



Department of Education and Training

Office of the Secretary

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The Hon Ingrid Stitt MP
Minister for Early Childhood
50 Lonsdale Street
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Dear Minister

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS 2020-22 FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING AS REGULATORY AUTHORITY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES

Thank you for your letter dated 19 February 2021, providing your 2020-22 Statement of Expectations (SOE) for the Department of Education and Training (DET).

This response relates to the 2020-22 Statements of Expectation you have issued to the Regulatory Authority, about the regulation of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services across Victoria. This response has been prepared and its activities will be implemented by the Department's Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD) who have been delegated to undertake most of the responsibilities of the Regulatory Authority for early childhood education and care under the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and associated regulations, and the *Victorian Children's Services Act 1996* and their respective regulations.

QARD will continue to prioritise its regulatory activities towards motivating and facilitating the delivery of high-quality early childhood education and care services to ensure children's safety and wellbeing are paramount and their learning and development opportunities are maximised.

The 2020-22 Statement of Expectations and our response will be published on the Department's website.

SOE Framework element of good regulatory practice / SOE Expectations	Performance measure	Activities
<p>Risk-based strategies</p> <p>Continue to apply, and identify opportunities to improve the implementation of risk-based strategies to effectively monitor service quality and compliance with the requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and the <i>Children’s Services Act 1996</i> (CS Act), to deliver regulatory outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of services receiving an overall rating of Working Towards NQS are inspected within 12 months of the final rating notice being issued • 25% of eligible services are assessed and rated under the NQS per annum. • 100% of newly approved services have a post approval inspection within 12 months • 100% of newly approved services have an assessment and rating quality audit within 18 months 	<p>Review QARD’s compliance monitoring frameworks to ensure service inspections and regulatory effort are targeted towards areas of higher regulatory risk.</p>
<p>Compliance related assistance and advice</p> <p>Provide clear and accessible compliance related assistance and advice to the Victorian early childhood education and care market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and care service providers are satisfied overall with the quality of QARD’s compliance related assistance and advice. • In QARD’s annual satisfaction survey, 70% of respondents indicate that overall, they were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’ with the regulatory support and guidance their service received from QARD 	<p>Review and update QARD’s web presence to provide clear and concise regulatory assistance and advice.</p> <p>Survey the early childhood education and care sector annually about the quality of QARD’s compliance related assistance and advice.</p> <p>Provide tailored support to services under CS Act to assist their transition to the new legislative framework.</p>
<p>Timeliness</p> <p>Improve timeliness and efficiency of the quality assessment and rating processes for service providers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average days taken to report and issue a notice of quality rating is 45 days 	<p>Review and streamline assessment and rating processes to reduce the time to determine a quality rating.</p>

SOE Framework element of good regulatory practice / SOE Expectations	Performance measure	Activities
<p>Clear and consistent regulatory activities</p> <p>Ensure enforcement practices are applied consistently and efficiently to minimise unnecessary regulatory burdens on regulated parties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquittal of the QARD's Review into Monitoring and Compliance Framework 	<p>Conduct a review of, and update QARD's Investigations Framework to ensure investigations and enforcement practices are clear and consistently applied.</p>
<p>Stakeholder consultation and engagement</p> <p>Engage with service providers and sector representatives to support the provision of high quality services across the Victorian market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate timely regulatory advice and guidance through newsletter or similar, to service providers at least quarterly Facilitate at least two regular meetings with the Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Reference Group. 	<p>Continue to publish regulatory update newsletters for service providers.</p> <p>Hold regular meetings with the Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Reference Group.</p>

Your expectations will be incorporated into QARD's Business Plan and will be reported through existing reports such as the QARD Annual Report.

These activities demonstrate QARD's commitment to good regulatory practice, promoting efficient and effective administration and enforcement of the regulations to achieve delivery regulatory outcomes while minimising impacts on regulated parties.

I look forward to working with you as the Department continues towards achieving best practice as the regulator of early childhood education and care and school aged care services in Victoria.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Atta
Secretary

10/5/2021