**Children, Youth and Community Services Policy and Research Working Group** **(CYCSPRWG)**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Membership**

* The Children, Youth and Community Services Policy and Research Working Group (CYCSPRWG) comprises members from Australian, State and Territory Government Children’s Services and Child Protection and Community Services agencies – nine jurisdictions in total.
* Members have a responsibility to represent and provide advice on behalf of their organisation or jurisdiction on all matters considered by CYCSPRWG.
* The CYCSPRWG Executive is comprised of the Chair, Deputy Chair and a Commonwealth representative.
* CYCSPRWG members elect a Chair who is a member of the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC) and notify SCCDSAC. The elected Chair holds this position for a period of one calendar year, following which members propose a new Chair. Subject to the approval of CYCSPRWG members, the incumbent Chair may be offered and accept a further term.
* CYCSPRWG members also elect a Deputy Chair to support the Chair and CYCSPRWG Executive. The elected Deputy Chair holds this position for a period of one calendar year, following which members propose a new Deputy Chair. Subject to the approval of CYCSPRWG members, the incumbent Deputy Chair may be offered and accept a further term.
* The co-chairs of the National Framework Implementation Working Group (NFIWG) are members of the CYCSPRWG Executive.
* The Commonwealth representative to the CYCSPRWG Executive also has responsibility for the CYCSPRWG Secretariat.
* The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) also has membership status and has specific responsibilities including technical advice on data and measurement issues as they apply to existing national data collections, and for the development of new collections. In the circumstance that an actual or perceived conflict of interest arises, AIHW representatives will absent themselves from discussions and decisions relating to that matter at the request of the Chair.
* Observer status may be granted to other government agencies or interested parties from time to time with the consent of CYCSPRWG members.

**Secretariat**

* The Secretariat provides support and facilitates the business of the CYCSPRWG.
* The Secretariat is provided by the Commonwealth.
* All jurisdictions contribute annually to fund the Secretariat role.

**Role of the CYCSPRWG**

* CYCSPRWG is a standing committee of the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services Advisory Council (SCCDSAC).
* The CYCSPRWG is responsible for:
	+ oversighting the relevant parts of the strategic agenda for SCCDSAC, including identifying items for SCCDSAC strategic discussion and ensuring that key items are elevated to SCCDSAC for decision.
	+ regularly reviewing the relative priority of SCCDSAC children’s, youth and community services sub-committees and projects to ensure ongoing arrangements are streamlined and efficiencies are maximised.
	+ decisions on, and preparation of, ~~proposing~~ the Children’s Services, Child Protection and Youth and Community Services agendas for the SCCDSAC and items for consideration by the Standing Council on Community and Disability Services (SCCDS).
	+ implementing the National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children (the National Framework) including the development of three year action plans, in conjunction with NFIWG.
	+ other actions relevant to the children’s services and youth and community services agendas.
* The CYCSPRWG provides strategic advice to SCCDSAC and to SCCDS on all children’s services, child protection and youth and community services-related issues.
* The CYCSPRWG has responsibility for high-level policy decisions informed by relevant data and information.
	+ Performance indicators and data relevant to the National Framework will be provided to CYCSPRWG through regular updates from NFIWG. This will support CYCSPRWG’s role in relation to implementing the National Framework and broader reform activities to progress the objectives of the National Framework.
	+ The CYCSPRWG will work alongside the Research, Evaluation and Data Working Group to ensure the sharing of information and input into meeting agendas relevant to children’s services, child protection and youth and community services, where appropriate.
	+ Additional work activities may be undertaken by CYCSPRWG as endorsed by SCCDSAC and/or SCCDS.
* The CYCSPRWG may also elect members as representatives on external working groups or committees. These representatives are responsible for reporting progress to the CYCSPRWG and seeking endorsement of recommendations on matters prior to decision-making that may significantly influence the children’s services and child protection and/or youth and community services agendas.
* A diagram of the reporting structure of the CYCSPRWG is at Attachment A.

**Other Sub-groups or Working Groups**

* In undertaking its work program, the CYCSPRWG may elect to establish time limited or standing working groups and sub-committees for specific purposes. Membership of the working groups and sub-committees is from those jurisdictions that elect to play an active role in the proposed project or issue.
* Working groups and sub-committees are not decision-making bodies; rather, they are responsible for developmental work and the provision of options and recommendations to the CYCSPRWG for consideration. Decisions on any matters referred to working groups and sub-committees are the province of the CYCSPRWG.
* The Chair of each working group or sub-committee is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the sub-committee’s work, providing status reports to CYCSPRWG meetings and seeking CYCSPRWG approval before progressing projects that impact on the work of working groups or project sub-groups.

**Funding**

**Secretariat**

* Members pay an annual contribution to support the Secretariat coordination function to the hosting jurisdiction. The amount of the contribution may be adjusted subject to the agreement of CYCSPRWG members.

**Administrative Arrangements**

**Meetings**

* The Secretariat coordinates all meetings of the CYCSPRWG that will include face-to-face meetings, videoconferencing and teleconferences.
* Meetings are to be held three times per year either face-to-face, teleconference or videoconference, as required. Meetings are to occur back-to-back with NFIWG.
	+ Face-to-face meetings are conducted in different jurisdictions, which self-nominate and meet the costs of hosting the meeting. Attending members meet their own travel, accommodation and other out-of-session costs.
* Agenda items are called for, and a draft agenda circulated, prior to each teleconference and face-to-face meeting.
* The CYCSPRWG Secretariat will aim to have agendas finalised and papers circulated two weeks prior to a face-to-face meeting and one week prior to a teleconference. This is of particular importance for agenda items requiring a decision and/or substantive discussion from members.
* If a relevant agenda paper is not available for circulation within the required timeframe, it may be withdrawn, downgraded to an information item or an additional week allowed for comments and/or decisions.
* The Secretariat will provide a proforma for agenda papers for both face-to-face and teleconference meetings.

**Out of session papers**

* Members may agree at meetings to circulate out-of-session papers for information or endorsement.
* Members may also agree with the Secretariat to circulate out-of-session papers, especially those requiring jurisdiction input to proposed recommendation(s).
* Jurisdiction agreement to out-of-session paper recommendations and/or comments to out-of-session papers must be forwarded to the CYCSPRWG Secretariat via the agreed mechanism.

**Dated**

These ToR were endorsed on 24 October 2012 by the CYCSPRWG and are to apply until replaced by new ToR agreed by the CYCSPRWG.

CYCSPRWG Reporting Structure Attachment A

SCCDS

**Attachment 3**

SCCDSAC

Intercountry Adoption Harmonisation Working Group

Find and Connect Consultative Forum

Past Adoption Practices Working Group

Research Task Group

Sub-Committee on Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors

Find and Connect Web Resource Advisory Group

Other project based working groups

Research Information Group

Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators

NCSIMG/Revised Research, Evaluation, Data Working Group

Children, Youth and Community Services Policy & Research Working Group

(CYCSPRWG)

National Framework Implementation Working Group

Performance and Data Working Group

Project based Working groups under Second Action Plan to be confirmed

Enhancing Adoption as a Service for Children Working Group

Technical Working and Information Group