ICMEC
AUSTRALIA

Impact Report 2024

Building a targeted force against child
sexual exploitation and abuse in Australia

Mission

Strengthen the entire professional system working to detect, report, prosecute, and prevent online sexual exploitation of children.

Vision

Creating a world where children are safe from abuse and exploitation.

ICMEC Australia respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay our respects to their elders, past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We also acknowledge the enduring impact of the Stolen Generations, recognising the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the face of historical injustices.

ICMEC Australia is an Australian Registered Charity. All donations over $2 are tax deductible.

To donate, go to icmec.org.au/donate or click here. By donating to ICMEC Australia, you become a partner in our mission of building a digital world where every child is protected and can thrive.

In this document a reference to 'ICMEC Australia', 'we', and 'our' is to the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC), Australia Ltd ACN 645 682 828.

Contents

*As our inaugural impact report, the reporting period for this report is 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2024. Our reporting period will then transition to annually for subsequent impact reports.

About us

At ICMEC Australia, we're turning the use of online technology to abuse children on its head. We empower industry and frontline professionals in the fight against child sexual abuse and exploitation, equipping them with technology and data-driven methods to detect, report, prosecute, and ultimately prevent, child sexual exploitation.

A message from our Board

As we unveil our inaugural Impact Report, we are energised by the strides we've made and the challenges that lie ahead in combatting child sexual exploitation (CSE). Our unwavering commitment to proactively halting and preventing CSE, fueled by innovative technology and data insights, is transforming how we detect, address, and prevent this critical issue. Alongside our dedicated partners and supporters, we are setting new standards in child protection and making bold advances that redefine the landscape of safeguarding our children.

This report reflects the collective efforts of a dynamic and passionate organisation dedicated to driving meaningful change. Over the past two years, we have launched groundbreaking initiatives, harnessed cutting-edge technology, and fostered robust partnerships, all with the goal of creating a safer world for children. Our achievements are a testament to the power of collaboration and innovation in tackling one of the most pressing issues of our time, the connection between online technology and CSE.

With rapid technology advancements, several commercial sectors have seen their platforms exploited by perpetrators. Our primary focus has been on the financial services industry, enhancing their capabilities to prevent their platforms from being misused in activities relating to Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) and trafficking. As part of this cohesive relationship, ICMEC Australia is committed to working with the financial services industry to detect and prevent harm to vulnerable children proactively.

As we look to the future, our resolve to enhance and expand our impact remains steadfast. We are committed to deepening our engagement with industry leaders, advancing our research, and implementing effective solutions that can be replicated globally.

In 2024, ICMEC Australia achieved an important milestone in being granted a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. This exciting development means going forward, we can pursue various funding strategies to allow us to continue our critical work.

Our journey is just beginning, and this report aims to showcase our continued effort to protect vulnerable children from exploitation. We are deeply grateful for our extensive network of supporters and stakeholders who stand with us on this vital mission.

We invite you to explore the highlights of our work and join us in our journey to create a world where technology serves as a safeguard, not a threat. Together, we will continue to confront the challenges, celebrate the victories, and build a brighter future for every child.

Jodie Arthur
Non-Executive Director

Anna Bowden
Non-Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer

Bob Cunningham
Non-Executive Director

Colm Gannon
Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Board

John Rouse APM
Non-Executive Director

A message from our CEO

Our vision at ICMEC Australia for a world where online technology cannot be used to abuse children, propels us to boldly confront an issue that most would rather avoid. Alongside our coalition of partners, we strive to deliver a strong and unified collective force to combat child sexual exploitation (CSE).

In just over two years of operations, ICMEC Australia has made a significant impact in strengthening the capability of industry professionals across the response system to detect, report, prosecute, and prevent CSE. Our achievements include developing a ground-breaking data product to assist CSE detection and delivering five innovative data projects in collaboration with financial services and government partners. Further, we have already provided dozens of educational webinars, hosted five major industry events, commissioned several groundbreaking research reports on CSE detection, and successfully incubated eight new technology and data-driven initiatives with external partners.

Our transformational journey from establishing a presence in Australia at the end of 2021 would not have been possible without funding from Westpac's Safer Children, Safer Communities program, our experienced and highly supportive Board of Directors, and all our stakeholders - who we have the privilege of serving every day.

Above all, I am immensely proud of our small but dedicated team, who work tirelessly to drive meaningful change for the sector. Our mighty team already has an international reputation for what we can deliver, and together with partners like you, we have exemplified the words of Margaret Mead; "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."

We still have a long way to go to keep children safe from harm. I am excited for the next chapter of our journey and continuing to work with you to deliver on this shared vision.

Anna Bowden
Chief Executive Officer

> I have been committed to guiding ICMEC Australia to do things differently. Supported by an exemplary team of leaders, we have championed a distinctive approach prioritising impact and innovation above all else.

Child sexual abuse is a human rights issue

In Australia, 1 in 4 children are sexually abused.

More than 1 in 3 girls, and almost 1 in 5 boys experience child sexual abuse.

(Australian Child Maltreatment Study, 2023)

Two images or videos of child sexual abuse are shared online **every second.**

(Child Safety Online! 2023)

On average, it will take **24 years** for these victims to disclose.

(Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017)

Reports of sexual extortion have **increased by 1,332%** from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

(eSafety Commissioner, 2024)

Child sexual abuse is not a new issue; however, the use of online technology is significantly evolving, which increases the risk of harm to children. In this report, we use the term 'online-facilitated' to broadly describe abuse that is enabled or distributed through digital technology.

For example, child sexual abuse material (CSAM) can be live-streamed using digital devices and/or distributed or sold as pre-recorded media through various platforms and networks. Additionally, CSAM can be created using Artificial Intelligence (AI), which is often trained on existing CSAM to generate new content and perpetuate harm.

There is also the troubling trend of children being exploited through sexualised content, known as 'sextortion,' by organised crime networks and individual perpetrators.

In all these scenarios, real children suffer physical, psychological, and emotional harm, with their fundamental human rights being violated. The trauma they endure often has long-lasting effects that persist into adulthood.

Unfortunately, this abuse is frequently a silent crime, thriving in the shadows due to limited awareness and stigma around the issue.

Our journey so far

At ICMEC Australia, our mission is to strengthen the entire system working to detect, report, prosecute, and prevent the online sexual exploitation of children. This includes fostering collaboration and solutions among financial institutions, law enforcement, regulatory and government bodies, academia, other not-for-profit organisations, and the broader corporate sector, to turn up the lights and fight this crime together.

Our journey so far has been marked by a steadfast commitment to enhance and support the evolving needs of the CSE response system. In just over two years of operation, we have delivered dozens of collaborative working group sessions and hosted five major industry events.

By engaging in continuous dialogues with stakeholders across industries, advocates, policymakers, and community partners, we ensure our strategies and actions are deliberate and value-adding to where it is most needed in the fight against CSE.

Key highlights of what we have achieved include a world-leading data product to aid industry partners in detecting and investigating CSE, five innovative data projects with financial services and government partners, several groundbreaking research reports on CSE detection, and successfully incubating eight new data-driven initiatives with external stakeholders.

Limitations in measuring our impact

The complex and sensitive nature of CSE means that we are limited in what we can report on. However, as an organisation, we are committed to being as accountable and transparent as possible about what we can achieve. In this report, we have tried our best to capture and convey the outcomes and impact of our activities.

Ethical considerations, data sensitivity, privacy concerns, and the need for strict confidentiality complicates our data collection and analysis process. For legal reasons, we do not receive direct data on our contributions to the prosecution of offenders or the relief of children suffering from sexual abuse and exploitation.

As a result, while we focus on measuring our progress toward the delivery of outputs, we cannot obtain specific attribution data of our outcomes.

The lack of standardised metrics and the evolving nature of CSE, particularly in the digital realm, also makes it challenging to develop consistent benchmarks for success.

In some cases even where we know we have successfully contributed to detection, reporting, or prosecution of CSE cases, we are legally, ethically, and pragmatically bound not to communicate any details.

Protecting children is our primary goal, and we would never do anything to jeopardise the progress of projects, strategies, or investigations.

As we strive to develop innovative and ethical methods to measure our impact, we remain committed to our mission with unwavering determination, confident that our efforts are making a meaningful difference in safeguarding vulnerable children.

Our Theory of Change

Our actions are guided by our Theory of Change, which envisions a holistic, systemic response that not only addresses the immediate needs in the fight against CSE but also tackles the key gaps in confronting the issue. Our targeted social outcomes are scaffolded by robust governance, an 'impact first' approach, an agile and positive culture, and exceptional levels of expertise.

We believe that by growing and sharing information and resources, filling gaps in the response system, and strengthening stakeholders working to combat CSE, we can significantly progress and support activities related to detection, reporting, and prosecution, ultimately striving for a world where every child can grow up free from the threat of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Impact

Victims Relieved

CSE Prevented

Perpetrators Convicted

Outcomes

More effective detection

More effective reporting

More efficient prosecution

Our activities

1. Catalysing innovation, data and tech-driven solutions

Promoting, facilitating, and accelerating the development, adoption, and implementation of innovative approaches, data-driven strategies, and technological solutions to combat CSE.

2. Advocating transformative, cross-industry action

Mobilising change and collaborating to bring meaningful action towards systemic improvements in policies, practices, and attitudes related to CSE.

3. Advancing the knowledge base

Facilitating knowledge development and research projects that enable a deeper understanding of issues, risks, and trends around detecting and preventing CSE.

4. Boosting awareness and information sharing

Educating stakeholder industries about CSE, enabling greater communication and information sharing within and across sectors to better safeguard children.

5. Strengthening frontline capabilities

Enhancing the skills, resources, and tools of those working to combat CSE directly.

1. Catalysing innovation, data and tech-driven solutions

In an era where technology permeates every facet of society, harnessing data-driven and technological solutions to combat CSE is imperative. We do this through our catalytic data and tech-driven partnerships and activities. These innovative programs leverage the intersection of advanced analytics, expert insights, and digital tools to enhance the intelligence and capability to detect and investigate CSE.

Lighthouse Data Product

Built by ICMEC Australia, the Lighthouse Data Product is a first of its kind. Millions of suspected CSE-related data records have been ingested into this localised product to provide financial services institutions and other key stakeholders with clues and indicators of online CSE-related artefacts, distribution methods, and analytical trends.

By processing the multitude of data sources with built-in analytical and visualisation tools, Lighthouse helps financial services institutions, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders overcome the difficulties of individually negotiating access to these bespoke, international data sources, as well as the internal challenges of extracting, transforming, and loading the data into a usable format. This in turn helps enhance the capability of those working to combat CSE to be leaders in the global financial crime and intelligence space.

Preliminary user testing for Lighthouse commenced in May 2024, with very positive feedback received. Based on this beta testing, Lighthouse's features and functionalities were refined, and launched in August 2024.

As a participant of the data product beta trial, I have been able to see how Lighthouse has allowed users to strengthen their detection of perpetrators in their systems. We look forward to continue working with ICMEC Australia on this initiative.

"

- Lighthouse beta tester

Australian RedFlag Accelerator CSE Portal

As the first recipient of support from ICMEC Australia's Child Protection Fund, we catalysed RedCompass Labs - a UK-based payments expert services company - in localising their Global RedFlag Accelerator Typologies on CSE into Australia. We further invested in RedCompass Labs to develop a searchable online portal, called the Australian RedFlag Accelerator CSE Portal, to house this intelligence and indicators of CSE. This new service enables Australian financial services institutions to easily access localised intelligence for detecting and reporting CSE.

In 2023, we convened a pilot group of users across four financial services institutions to participate in the initial user testing of this portal. As part of our continued investment, a further 6-months beta user program was launched in April 2024. This beta user program extended portal access to additional financial services actively participating in ICMEC Australia's Collaboration Working Group to further test and enhance the portal's value and functionality.

To date, nearly 50 users from across 12 financial services institutions have been using the Australian RedFlag Accelerator CSE Portal to help detect suspicious activities related to CSE.

Having been involved from the very first user test group, I see great value in the Portal being used as a one-stop-shop for all Australian banks to access the latest CSE typologies. This is only possible through ICMEC Australia's work in bringing RedCompass Lab's global tool to Australia, enhancing the CSE detection capabilities for the Australian FinCrime community.

-- Mark Dickson, Executive Manager, Financial Intelligence Unit, Westpac

"

2. Advocating transformative and cross-industry action

A unified and transformative approach across industries that transcends traditional boundaries is crucial to fight CSE. No single organisation can combat this issue alone. By fostering cross-industry action, we bring a range of stakeholders together, including law enforcement, non-government organisations, government, academia, financial services, and other corporations, to ensure a whole-of-sector response to protect children from online harm.

Financial Crime Collaboration Working Group (CWG)

Sadly, child sexual exploitation flourishes in the darkness of limited information sharing. Even where knowledge about the crime type is strong, information and efforts to fight it are typically siloed. This means thousands of puzzle pieces of digital evidence are separated across different sectors, industries, and organisations. We cannot effectively detect, report, and prosecute this crime unless those puzzle pieces are brought together through cross-sector information sharing.

Convened by ICMEC Australia, our Financial Crime Collaboration Working Group (CWG) is the only initiative in Australia solely dedicated to enhancing the detection, reporting, and prevention of financial transactions related to CSE. Financial crimes teams from more than 15 financial services institutions, particularly banks, remitters, and payment platforms, participate in the CWG, alongside regulators, subject matter experts, and law enforcement from across the Australian states, territories, and federal government.

> The CWG provides a platform for people of different sectors to understand what others are doing to combat the abuse of children. "
>
> -- CWG Participant

Over the past two years, we have hosted 17 Working Group meetings, with over 60 representatives. These meetings adhere to Chatham House Rule, allowing for emerging CSE risks and typologies to be shared in a secure forum by industry stakeholders so they can be better equipped to tackle this rapidly evolving crime.

In addition to emerging risks and typologies being a standing agenda item of the CWG, we have delivered several collaborative data projects in partnership with members of the CWG. These include five data projects which were successfully matured and transitioned to the regulator. The collaborative efforts of the CWG group have seen financial services institutions broaden and strengthen their approach to this crime whilst enhancing their knowledge on this complex issue.

> Networking and relationship building is incredibly valuable and I see ICMEC Australia as a very powerful driver of this. "
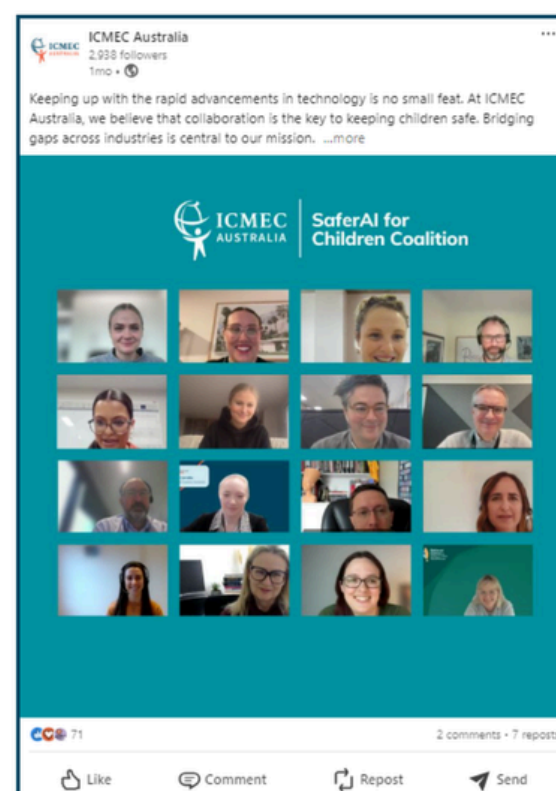>
> -- CWG Participant

SaferAI for Children Coalition

In 2024, we established the SaferAI for Children Coalition, the first national collaboration of cross-industry experts focused on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on child protection.

Over 20 organisations are already involved, including representatives from non-profits, law enforcement, government, academia, and regulatory bodies.

Our initial meetings have fostered significant cross-sector knowledge exchange. As a group, we focus on driving actions to address AI-related child protection challenges, including tackling the misuse of AI and exploring how to leverage the technology to protect children better.

The Coalition has agreed to develop a joint discussion paper, expected to be released in late 2024. This paper will outline any significant gaps and opportunities for protecting children from abuse and exploitation in the age of AI.

ICMEC Australia
2,938 followers
1mo

Keeping up with the rapid advancements in technology is no small feat. At ICMEC Australia, we believe that collaboration is the key to keeping children safe. Bridging gaps across industries is central to our mission. ...more

ICMEC AUSTRALIA | SaferAI for Children Coalition

71   2 comments · 7 reposts

👍 Like   💬 Comment   🔁 Repost   ➤ Send

Advocacy and policy submissions

At ICMEC Australia, we actively engage with government bodies and key decision-makers to ensure that child protection remains a top priority on the national agenda. These include submitting more than ten submissions over the past two years to influence policymakers and legislation, raise awareness of emerging threats, and recommend effective strategies to safeguard children. A sample of our submissions are included in the table below.

Social Media & Australian Society	Statutory Review of the Online Safety Act	UN Special Rapporteur: Existing and Emerging Sexually Exploitative Practices against Children in the Digital Environment
We raised the importance of an age verification pilot, enhanced mental health support for victim-survivors, and technological innovations to tackle child sexual exploitation.	We advocated for the enhancement of the Online Safety Act 2021 to explicitly address evolving technology and risks to children.	We advocated for the dual role of AI as both a potential threat and a powerful tool in the fight against CSE.
Attorney-General's Department Public Consultation on Doxxing and Privacy Reforms	**Select Committee on Adopting AI**	**eSafety Public Consultation on Draft Relevant Electronic Services Standard and Draft Designated Internet Services Standard**
We argued for a collaborative approach that protects children from online exploitation while respecting individual privacy.	We raised how critical it is for children to be considered in these policies, and called for balanced regulation that harnesses technological advancements for the betterment of child safety.	We stressed the importance of quickly adapting to the evolving digital landscape to safeguard children effectively.
Modernising Australia's Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Regime	**Modern Slavery Amendment (Australian Anti-Slavery Commissioner) Bill 2023**	
We advocated on behalf of financial services for legislative change that would assist in the detection and reporting of financial crimes related to CSE.	Recognising the intersection of child sexual exploitation and modern slavery, we supported the establishment of an Australian Anti-Slavery Commissioner. Our submission highlighted the crucial role this office could play in strengthening the national response to these interconnected crimes.	

3. Advancing the knowledge base

Multiple sectors have a crucial role in combatting CSE, but our influence is determined by the evidence base available to us about the dynamics of the crime and best practices in countering it. For this reason, ICMEC Australia has quickly taken a leading role in facilitating key research and insights from subject matter experts and academics on the trends, growth, and impact of online-facilitated CSE.

Child Sexual Abuse Reduction Research Network's Inaugural Workshop

In December 2023, we were the proud gold sponsor of the inaugural Child Sexual Abuse Research Reduction Network (CSARRN) Workshop held in Adelaide. Hosted by the University of Adelaide, the event brought together key researchers, practitioners, and global thought leaders to collaboratively share their work around factors associated with CSE offending, developing forensic tools to improve investigatory practices, promoting interventions that reduce victimisation, and exploring new ways to support victim-survivors. The workshop included our Head of Data Products, Warren Bulmer, who presented his research paper on DarkNet child exploitation forums.
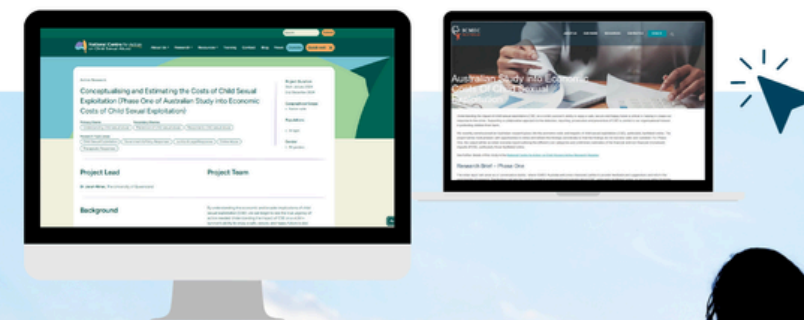
By sponsoring and participating in important forums such as the CSARRN, we foster interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches to ensure CSE research is deconflicted and addresses critical knowledge gaps.

Examining the costs of child sexual exploitation and abuse in Australia

We are pleased to have initiated an Australian research program to examine the economic costs of child sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly those that are facilitated online. In early 2024, we commissioned Dr Jonah Rimer, Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Convenor of Postgraduate Cyber Criminology at the University of Queensland, to establish a baseline of what is currently known and not known about this topic.

This initial research project aims to conceptualise the multi-faceted meaning of 'costs' in relation to child sexual exploitation and abuse victimisation, offending, and service responses across Australia. The research is expected to be finalised in late 2024. As part of our commitment to strengthening the knowledge base and fostering better-informed discussions, the findings will be made publicly accessible. This will help elevate conversations about the impact of child sexual exploitation and abuse and the need for more comprehensive solutions.

Supporting the next generation of researchers

One of the things we are most proud of at ICMEC Australia is our success in raising awareness about online-facilitated CSE. We have encouraged substantial engagement from numerous stakeholders and researchers around child protection issues.

As technology evolves rapidly, there is an urgent need for more research and innovative ideas across various disciplines.

In 2024, ICMEC Australia partnered with the University of Queensland on two separate research projects.

For the first project, we are supporting a Masters of Cyber Security student on a ten-month research project that will explore the effectiveness of online-facilitated CSE prevention initiatives.

This research will analyse various prevention materials and compare them to the behaviours and interactions of children, guardians, and online CSE offenders. We look forward to receiving and sharing these findings in mid-2025.

In the second project, we are supporting and mentoring five final-year Bachelor of Social Science students on a year-long applied industry research project. This project will investigate the social, policy, and legislative implications of AI-generated CSAM.

This research partnership is crucial for preparing the next generation of thought leaders and equipping them with practical, evidence-based insights and experience on the contemporary issue of AI-generated CSAM. We anticipate receiving the students' research findings by the end of 2024.

4. Boosting awareness and information sharing

The horror of child abuse is a topic many prefer to avoid, yet it is precisely these conversations that have the power to save lives. Information sharing is not just important—it is essential.

Every conversation, every piece of shared knowledge, and every collaboration strengthens our collective ability to combat CSE.

Industry professionals can only perform at their best when fully informed, equipped with the latest insights, and connected to a network of dedicated experts. Through expert-led workshops, industry conferences, networking events, and roundtable discussions, we break down silos and foster the exchange of critical information that is pivotal in protecting vulnerable children.

We engage with a number of key industries in our mission to boost information sharing and awareness, inclusive of those highlighted below.

Financial services institutions

Law enforcement agencies

Not-for-profit organisations

Government and regulatory agencies

Academia

Other corporate organisations

Corporate Awareness Program

In 2024, ICMEC Australia launched a Corporate Awareness Program aimed at financial services institutions across Australia. This initiative was designed to raise awareness within the financial services sector, emphasising the unique and crucial role that financial institutions can play in detecting, reporting, and preventing technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation.

Delivered through a pilot phase with select services, including the Corporate Vulnerability Team of a large-sized financial institution and the Financial Crime Team of a medium-sized institution, our program provided a high-level overview to approximately 150 participants on the nature and prevalence of child sexual abuse, explaining the relevant typologies, and highlighting the responsibilities and potential actions financial services institutions can take to combat this issue.

Feedback from participants indicated a significant increase in their understanding of the issue of CSE, and constructive comments have allowed us to refine the program content for the official launch that will take place in late 2024.
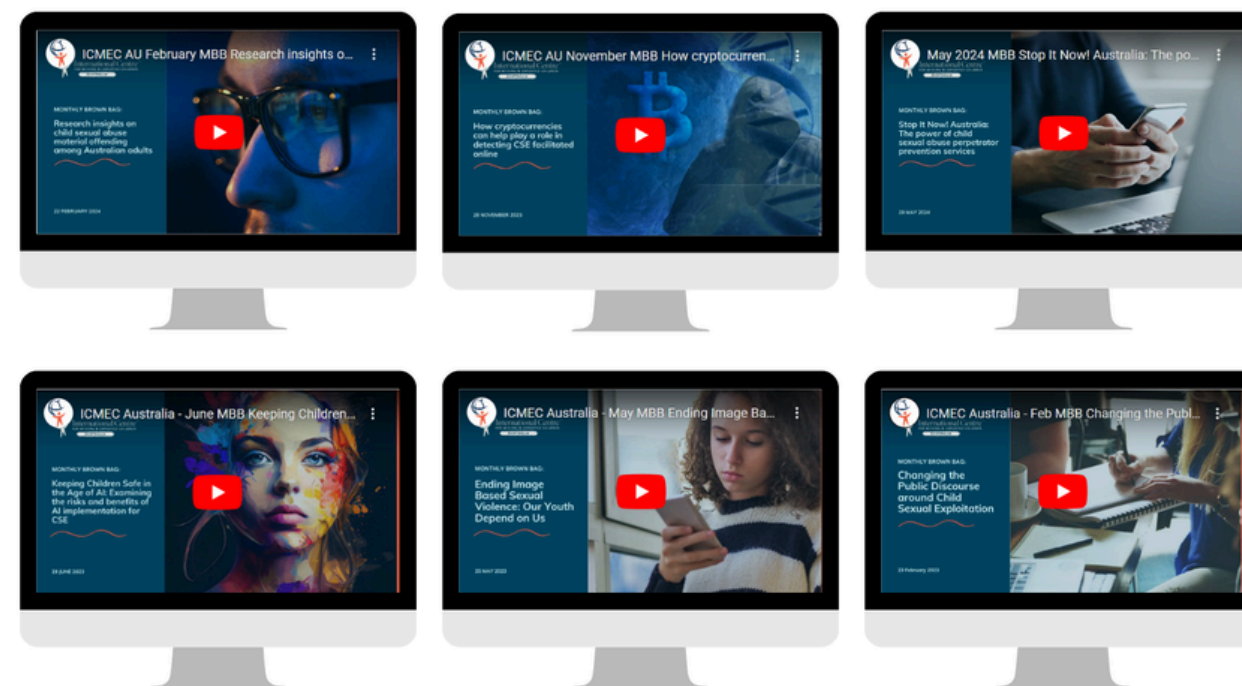
Monthly Brown Bags

Our Monthly Brown Bags were launched in 2023 in response to an identified need from industry stakeholders to grow awareness and knowledge about this ever-evolving crime. Held as one-hour virtual sessions, these webinars allow stakeholders across various industries to hear key insights and learn about emerging issues from subject matter experts.

12 Monthly Brown Bags delivered	Over 1,300 attendees	Over 1,900 registrants

These events have been vital in developing networks with key industry members, resulting in approximately 50% of contacts registered per webinar being new, additionally demonstrating our value in spreading awareness.

The webinar was fantastic, very relevant to what we do in financial institutions and gave some pointers on what we can look for day to day.

-- MBB attendee

> I've been to hundreds of conferences in my career, though I have never been to a more impactful one.
>
> -- Symposium attendee

The ICMEC Australia Symposium

October 2023 saw the launch of our inaugural ICMEC Australia Symposium. This key one-day event brought together almost 100 attendees and 43 organisations from across the financial services and corporate sectors, law enforcement, government, academia, and regulators. More than 20 subject matter experts presented on the day - sharing new research findings, trends, tools, and emerging issues.

The Symposium was highly successful and greatly valued by the attendees, with an overall rating of 4.93 out of 5 received. With the success of this inaugural event, we will continue to convene this Symposium annually for the benefit of the CSE response system.

Over 100 attendees

43 organisations

20 subject matter expert presenters

4.93 out of 5.0 rating received from attendees

Representing the cause

We firmly believe that representation is crucial as it ensures our voices are heard and our mission is highlighted across the broader sector.

We bring the conversation to the table and aim to elevate meaningful and relevant discussions, including with several groups who, to date, did not know they had a role to play in child protection.

Our involvement across industry events has allowed us to stay on-top of emerging trends and best practices, enabling us to adapt and innovate our approach. It has enhanced opportunities for the development of industry awareness, strategic partnerships and collaboration, and for a stronger, collective position to advance our cause.

Despite only having a small team, we have been invited to present at more than 50 industry forums and organisations over the past two years.

Our representations have included the Australian Banking Association's (ABA) Customer Advocate Group, Macquarie University's Financial Integrity Hub, Youth Technology and Virtual Communities (YTVC), the Customer Owned Banking Association (COBA), and the Interbank Forum. Additionally, we've led several awareness-raising campaigns, such as the It's A Penalty #KeepKidsSafe campaign in Sydney and hosted a launch event for renowned journalist Madonna King's book *Saving Our Kids*, which also showcased our work at ICMEC Australia.

These initiatives underscore the critical importance of our response to online child sexual exploitation and the growing severity of this crime.

Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (ACAMS) Australasian Chapter November 2023 Event: Understanding Child Sexual Exploitation in the Financial World & Scams - The Challenge for Fincrime

Australian Banking Association (ABA) Customer Advocate Group

Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) Prevention Stakeholder Workshop

Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) On Us: Australian Business Coalition for Safeguarding Children Launch

Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) Conference 2023

Bravehearts Golf Day

Child Sexual Abuse Reduction Research Network (CSARRN) Event

Children in the Pictures launch event

CyberCX Child Safeguarding Roundtable

Macquarie University's Financial Integrity Hub Financial Crime Summit

Financial Services Compliance Forum

Global Coalition to Fight Financial Crime (GCFFC) Asia Pacific (APAC) Region Chapter Event - Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC)

Inaugural PartnerSPEAK National Action Group Meeting Interbank Forum

International Association of Financial Crimes Investigators (IAFCI) Quarterly Meeting

It's a Penalty #KeepKidsSafe Campaign Launch Panel Event

KPMG Financial Crime team presentation

Launch of Madonna King's Book '*Saving our Kids*'

Macquarie Bank Corruption and Human Rights Town Hall

Marie Claire Woman of the Year Event

Monash University Australian Federal Police (AFP) AI for Law Enforcement and Community Safety (AiLECS) Lab Launch

National Australia Bank (NAB) Bank and Crypto Roundtable

New South Wales (NSW) Anti-Slavery Forum

United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur Presentation & Roundtable

Youth, Technology and Virtual Communities (YTVC) Conference

5. Strengthening frontline capabilities

Those working on the frontlines of child protection are our most critical assets in the fight against CSE. Many professionals tirelessly perform some of the most challenging work imaginable to keep children safe from harm. Unfortunately, due to the rapidly evolving nature of this technology-based crime, the sector is undoubtedly under-resourced for this immense task. This is why we do everything possible to support these workers with tools, research, training, and networks to foster best practices and a coordinated approach to detecting, responding to, and preventing CSE.

Uplifting law enforcement agency capabilities

In October 2023, we presented to the law enforcement agency (LEA) group 'Operation GRIFFIN' to seek support for LEA training initiatives, receiving favourable feedback in our survey results. The feedback helped us assess where training could be delivered across four distinct categories: general awareness, victim-centric programs, CSE specialised investigator training, and forensic evidence training.

There was also a strong interest in general awareness and victim engagement programs to further support frontline officers to handle delicate matters in a trauma-informed manner.

The ICMEC Australia training program, launched in late 2023, leverages national and international subject matter experts to provide contemporary knowledge and best practices to LEAs and government agencies. Training sessions have been delivered both nationally and internationally within Romania, Thailand, Cambodia, and the United States, and for the eSafety Commissioner and the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL).

We are building on these initiatives further. Over the coming months, we will be bringing a number of renowned international trainers to Australia to bolster our LEA partners.

Victim identification case data analysis

Through ICMEC Australia's Child Protection Fund, we supported world-leading victim identification expert, Paul Griffiths, to undertake a pioneering study of successful techniques in child victim identification.

With 30 years of experience working to investigate online child abuse, Paul worked with Australian and international law enforcement agencies to review close to 2,500 child exploitation cases. Analysis of detailed annotations captured 40 distinct investigative techniques that were successfully employed in the identification of a child, or suspected producer, of child exploitation material. These confidential findings were presented to the INTERPOL Specialist Group on Crimes Against Children in early 2024.

While details cannot be publicly revealed due to their highly classified nature, we understand this study assisted law enforcement to review unidentified cases and provided a mechanism for growing the institutional memory of the international victim identification community.

I am certainly pleased with the way it has turned out and INTERPOL was the ideal venue to share the outcomes, the project will definitely be the catalyst for continued developments in the victim identification community.
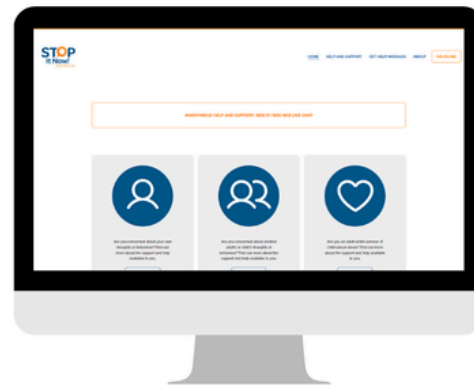
-- Paul Griffiths, Victim Identification Manager (Outgoing), Queensland Police Service

Stop it Now! Australia

In 2024, we supported Jesuit Social Services through ICMEC Australia's Child Protection Fund to adapt and enhance their successful global child sexual abuse prevention service, Stop It Now! – into Australia. The service offers an anonymous helpline, chat, and web resources for people concerned about their own or someone else's sexual thoughts or behaviour towards children. By potentially intervening as early as possible, this is a critical and progressive initiative working to prevent CSE.

We identified a significant need for bridging support in Australia to ensure the continuity of this essential service. As a result of our partnership, Stop It Now! Australia assisted over 70 individuals in five months, responding to more than 88 calls and 18 chats.

> **I can't imagine what I'd be doing now or where I'd be without [Stop It Now!] there.**
>
> -- Stop It Now! Australia service user.

We are deeply grateful for the support of ICMEC Australia and have thoroughly enjoyed collaborating with their exceptional team. The interim funding from the Child Protection Fund has enabled us to continue delivering the Stop It Now! Australia service. Throughout their support, ICMEC Australia has prioritised helping us sustain the service over rigid reporting requirements, relieving us of significant administrative pressure and allowing us to focus on the needs of our service. We look forward to the opportunity to work with ICMEC Australia again and sincerely thank them for their ongoing commitment to supporting vital services like ours.

-- Georgia Naldrett, Manager, Stop It Now! Australia

Meet our Board

Jodie Arthur
Non-Executive Director

Jodie Arthur is the General Manager of Financial Crime at Westpac and Group Money Laundering Reporting Officer. Jodie joined Westpac in mid 2020 following her role as Regional Head of Financial Crime Compliance at Standard Chartered Bank, based in Singapore. Jodie's background has been in Financial Services for 20+ years, in a variety of senior roles spanning Internal Audit and Compliance. For the past 15+ years Jodie has specialised in Financial Crime Risk.

Anna Bowden
**Non-Executive Director and
Chief Executive Officer**

Anna is CEO of ICMEC Australia, leading the charge in creating a safer world free from the sexual exploitation of children. For more than two decades, Anna has been at the forefront of the social services and impact sector, dedicating her career to solving some of the world's most complex challenges through strategic investment and innovation. Holding senior roles at the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment, Impact Investing Australia, NSW Government Office of Social Impact Investment, and Sefa (Social Enterprise Finance Australia), Anna has led and contributed to projects that have delivered significant social and environmental outcomes. Anna's tireless advocacy efforts have placed her as a leader in the global movement dedicated to safeguarding vulnerable children. She was honoured by the Financial Integrity Hub as the Financial Crime Fighter of the Year in 2023, a testament to her unwavering dedication.

Bob Cunningham
Non-Executive Director

As a highly experienced not-for-profit leader, Bob believes we must be able to do better than this for children. Bob has been President and CEO at the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children since 2018.

Colm Gannon
Non-Executive Director

Colm Gannon is a seasoned professional with extensive experience in digital safety, cybercrime investigations, and software development. With 20 years in law enforcement, he has been involved in national and international investigations and prosecutions relating to child sexual exploitation, violent extremism, and harmful online communication. His focus on protecting the vulnerable has continued into his extensive technical development career. He is currently a Product Manager with Rigr AI, where he is involved in the software development process and is responsible for policy development, including child protection, privacy impact assessment, legal, and ethical assessments for AI/machine learning.

Jon Rouse APM
Non-Executive Director

Jon Rouse is one of the world's most recognised and influential figures in the fight against child sexual exploitation. He has 39 years of law enforcement experience with QPS, 27 of those years dedicated to investigating crimes against children, notably leading Task Force Argos and the Victim Identification, Covert and training teams at the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation. He accepted the 'Champion for Children' Award in 2018 from ICMEC USA and was awarded the QLD Australian of the Year in 2019. He is the recipient of numerous QLD and National Police Awards and is the ambassador for several Australian child protection organisations. Jon joined the ICMEC Australia Board in December 2022 as part of his continued commitment to protecting and saving children from sexual exploitation and abuse.

Meet our Executive Team

Tiphanie Au
Head of Impact

As Head of Impact at ICMEC Australia, Tiphanie oversees our Child Protection Fund, drives our catalytic data and tech-driven partnerships, and leads our whole-of-organisation impact strategy and reporting. This is grounded by her interdisciplinary experience in delivering cutting-edge programs to achieve measurable and scalable impact. Before joining ICMEC Australia, Tiphanie had over a decade of experience in the public sector. Notably, she spent seven years at the NSW Government Office of Social Impact Investment, where she played a pivotal role in establishing NSW's ~$250 million impact investment portfolio across various social services including child protection, youth unemployment, homelessness, and recidivism. Her impact investing expertise is widely recognised, including an honorary appointment as a Visiting Fellow of Practice of the University of Oxford's Government Outcomes Lab.

Anna Bowden
Chief Executive Officer

See Anna's bio under 'Meet our Board'.

Warren Bulmer
Head of Data Products

Warren collaborates with industry to create innovative technological solutions to make the world a safer place for children. A retired Detective Constable with 30 years at the Toronto Police Service specialising in criminal investigations, Warren has extensive experience in fighting against CSE and sharing this knowledge with other professionals. Warren has been an international instructor in computer and internet-facilitated crime, having lectured over 7,000 judges, prosecutors, and police from 39 different countries to date. He has also taught at the United Nations in Thailand; the Canadian Police College; the Ontario Police College; and at Humber College, where he instructed students in conducting online investigations and open-source intelligence techniques (OSINT). Warren also worked for the Australian Federal Police as a Product Manager for three years, where he helped build technical capabilities for the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE).

Rosie Campo
Head of Collaboration

Rosie is the Head of Collaboration at ICMEC Australia, where she plays a pivotal role in growing awareness and enhancing the fight against CSE in the corporate sector. With a wealth of experience spanning the public and private sectors, Rosie uses her expertise by working with stakeholders to advocate for children's rights within Australian organisations. Collaborating closely with banks and corporate entities, Rosie spearheads initiatives to enhance the financial detection and reporting of CSE. Her unwavering dedication underscores her belief that protecting children is a collective responsibility, requiring collaboration and unwavering dedication across a range of sectors and institutions. Through her advocacy and collaborative efforts, Rosie continues to be a driving force in the fight against child exploitation, striving to create a safer world for all children.

Danielle Kelly

Head of Capacity and Prevention

Dannielle (Danni) is our Head of Capacity and Prevention at ICMEC Australia. She leverages her extensive expertise in advocacy, prevention, and stakeholder management to lead collaborative, research-driven initiatives with our diverse stakeholder groups.

Previously with the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE), Danni brings over 17 years of experience from the Australian Federal Police (AFP). In her tenure there, she played pivotal leadership roles in organisational reform, enhancing workplace culture, and overseeing critical projects, including the AFP's Future Direction and long-term operational strategies. Danni is dedicated to building impactful partnerships across industries, law enforcement, and academia to advance child protection efforts both in Australia and internationally.

Acknowledgement and thank you

We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to our outstanding community of allies, partners, and supporters who generously provided their time, expertise, and resources to further our cause in strengthening the entire system working to detect, report, prosecute, and prevent the sexual exploitation of children. We wouldn't be here without you.

NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT

Allens ≫

Amazon Web Services	National Australia Bank	Vertex Cyber Security
AusPayNet	Open Corporates	WebIQ
Canva	Paliscope	
GeoComply	Plus People	
Hamilton Locke	Prolegis Lawyers	
Kablamo	SimpleBiz	
KPMG Australia	The University of Queensland	
LegalVision		

Glossary

Artificial Intelligence (AI) - generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM)	The use of AI tools to create new content, such as images and videos, to produce realistic appearing, or partially synthetic, child sexual abuse materials. AI-generated child sexual abuse material is harmful and abusive, and is illegal in Australia under Commonwealth law.
Child	Under the Convention of the Rights of the Child (Article 1), every human being below the age of 18 years is considered a child unless under the national law applicable to the child, maturity is attained earlier.
Child sexual abuse (CSA)	The UN Refugee Agency defines child sexual abuse not only as violent sexual assault of children, but also other sexual activities, including inappropriate touching, where the child does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared. Child sexual abuse includes a range of other offenses, including grooming, viewing sexual abuse images, and encouraging children to act in sexually inappropriate ways. Both adults and minors can commit child sexual abuse, and it can occur online and offline.
Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)	The Child Sexual Abuse Material: Model Legislation & Global Review 2018, defines child sexual abuse material as any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes.
Child sexual exploitation (CSE)	Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. According to the World Health Organisation, child sexual exploitation is any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, differential power or trust, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another involving a person below the age of 18.
Online sexual exploitation of children	The sexual abuse of a child that is partly or entirely facilitated by technology.

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