ICMEC
AUSTRALIA

IMPACT
REPORT
FY2024–25

Creating a world where
technology cannot be
used to harm children

Our mission

To uplift the professionals who detect, report, prosecute, and prevent CSEA.

Our vision

Creating a world where technology cannot be used to harm children.

Acknowledgement of country

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.

If you'd like to donate

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

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.

SCAN
or CLICK

Contents

ICMEC AUSTRALIA

About us

At ICMEC Australia, we are committed to strengthening the professionals that protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA).

We work across sectors to support frontline professionals, policymakers, and industry with the tools, training, and insights they need to detect, disrupt, and prevent harm. We focus on strengthening collaboration, building the capacity of frontline professionals, leveraging technology, and applying data-informed strategies to prevent abuse and keep children safe. By uniting expertise, innovation, and determination, we are building a world where children are protected, everywhere, every day.

How we measure impact

Measuring impact in the field of child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) is complex, given the ethical, legal, and privacy considerations involved. At ICMEC Australia, our priority is safeguarding children and upholding the integrity of our programs and partnerships. We assess our impact through a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, including:

- Delivery and reach of our programs
- Number of professionals trained
- Strategic partnerships formed
- Resources developed and shared
- Feedback from frontline professionals and stakeholders
- Observable changes in policy, practice, or sector capability

Where appropriate, we also use data-informed metrics such as engagement rates, training evaluations, and indicators of increased sector readiness.

This report shares the outcomes we can responsibly publish, reflecting our ongoing efforts to support those working on the frontlines and to drive system-wide change that protects children. We continue to explore ethical and innovative ways to measure and communicate the real-world influence of our work.

A message from our CEO

At ICMEC Australia, we are working to create a world where technology cannot be used to harm children.

This is not an abstract goal. It is a concrete vision that requires coordination across sectors, the right tools in the hands of frontline responders, and policy that keeps pace with evolving threats.

This vision continues to guide everything we do. Over the last year, we delivered tangible outcomes that strengthened Australia's response to child sexual exploitation and abuse. We launched our Lighthouse data product to support investigations, hosted numerous Financial Crime Collaboration Working Group meetings, and delivered national law enforcement training to over 100 police officers. We also supported international capacity building by training 50 prosecutors in Cambodia.

We brought together more than 120 senior leaders for the ICMEC Australia Symposium and convened over 100 stakeholders for the inaugural SaferAI for Children Summit. Through our Monthly Brown Bag webinars, we reached over 900 attendees, and our three-part Bank Webinar Series engaged 65 financial institutions nationwide. We supported the Queensland Police Service with the early groundwork for the Argos Guardian app, delivered over 15 key stakeholder presentations, and participated in more than 20 sector events.

Over the past year, we published phase one of our *Economic costs of child sexual exploitation and abuse* review paper, the first of its kind in Australia to highlight the long-term financial impact of child sexual abuse. We developed four policy and advocacy submissions, and partnered with the University of Queensland to support three student research projects.

We also continue to amplify our impact through targeted communications, strong media engagement and a growing digital presence.

Looking ahead, we are guided by a clear strategy with five goals that will shape our work through to the end of 2026. These goals are to connect sectors to drive action against CSEA, equip frontline professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to respond effectively, champion safe innovation to develop tools that detect, disrupt, and prevent harm, promote child protection as a key consideration for policy and practice, and enhance ICMEC Australia's own organisational sustainability and capability. Together, these priorities reflect our commitment to transforming collective responsibility into measurable action.
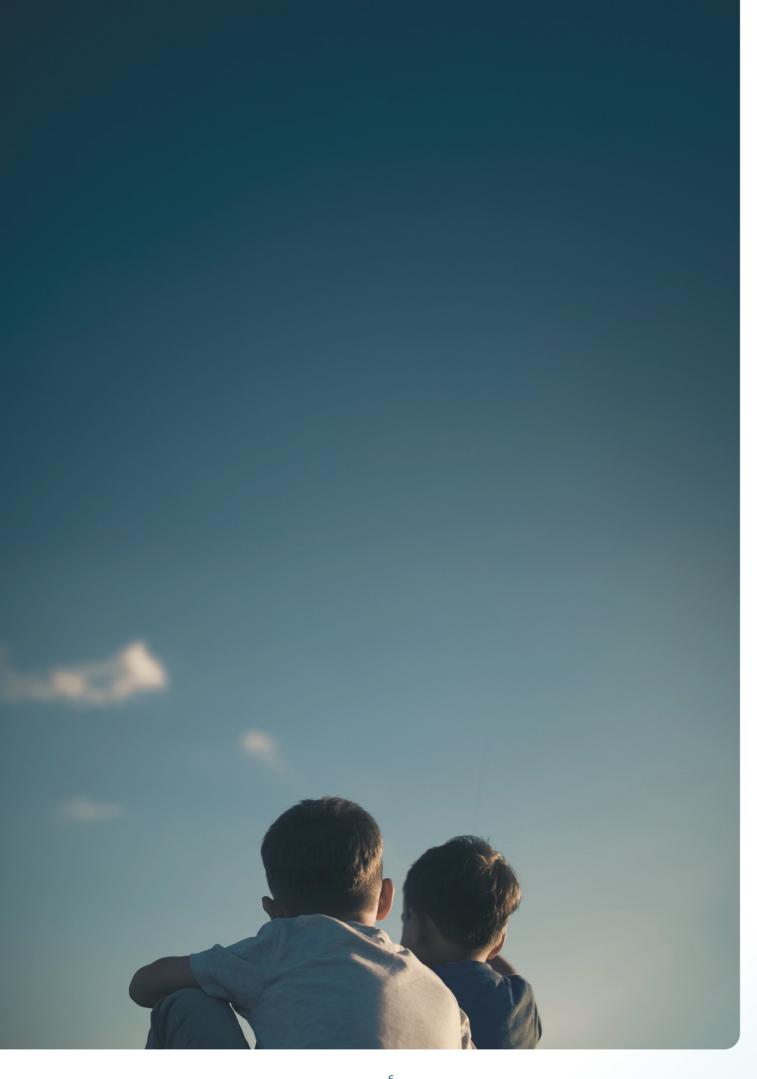
At the heart of our mission is a simple focus: **to strengthen the professionals who detect, disrupt, and prevent child sexual exploitation and abuse. I** am proud to lead a small, skilled, and relentless team. A team that delivers meaningful change through partnership, innovation, and action. And a team that never loses sight of the children we are here to protect.

Thank you for standing with us.

Colm Gannon
Chief Executive Officer

ICMEC AUSTRALIA

A message from our Board

This year's impact report marks a significant turning point for ICMEC Australia. What started as a bold vision to unite different sectors in the fight against child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) has evolved into a recognised force for practical, system-wide change. Throughout this report, you will see an organisation that is building capacity, shaping policy, developing tools, and strengthening the professionals dedicated to keeping children safe.

The scale and complexity of CSEA require more than just good intentions; they demand coordination, insight, and courage. This year, ICMEC Australia has risen to that challenge with clarity and determination. Through initiatives in financial crime disruption, AI safety leadership, and policy reform, the organisation is effectively closing critical gaps in the national response. The development and launch of Lighthouse, the SaferAI for Children Coalition, and targeted support for frontline investigators are just a few examples of how the team is transforming insights into meaningful impact and reinforcing its role as a trusted contributor to both national and global efforts.

This work is guided by a clear vision for the future. Our board supports a new strategy that outlines measurable goals through 2026, aimed at driving system-wide action, enhancing frontline responses, and embedding child protection across policy, innovation, and industry. This approach is grounded in evidence, built on collaboration, and focused on creating lasting impact.

We are also proud to support the leadership of our new CEO, Colm Gannon, who is assembling a skilled and dedicated team committed to making a difference across every aspect of the response system.

We extend our gratitude to the team, partners, and supporters who have contributed to this momentum.

At ICMEC Australia, we are working to create a world where technology cannot be used to harm children, while also demonstrating that it can play a vital role in the solution when every sector does its part.

Board of Directors

ICMEC AUSTRALIA

The critical issue of child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA)

CSEA is a pervasive and deeply damaging crime. It strips children of their safety, dignity, and rights, and it is happening at a scale that demands urgent attention. While often hidden from view, the harm is real and lasting, with impacts that extend well into adulthood.

Today, the abuse of children is increasingly being enabled, amplified, and concealed by digital technology. The rise in online-facilitated exploitation, from livestreamed abuse to AI-generated sexual material, has created new challenges for detection, prevention, and response. Offenders are adapting quickly. Our systems must do the same.

We use the term online-facilitated abuse to describe any child sexual exploitation that is enabled, distributed, or exacerbated by digital tools or platforms. This includes the creation and circulation of child sexual abuse material (CSAM), the use of AI to generate abuse imagery, and the coercion of children through tactics like sexual extortion.

Despite growing awareness, many children continue to suffer in silence, isolated by fear, shame, or lack of support. Most will wait years to disclose what has happened to them. Meanwhile, reports of abuse are rising sharply, both in Australia and globally, placing enormous pressure on frontline responders and child protection systems. Ending child sexual exploitation and abuse demands collective action, with children's safety, rights, and dignity driving every decision we make.

Please see page 39 for full citations of all data referred to in this section.

1 in 4 Australian children experience sexual abuse (ACMS, 2023).

2 images or videos of child sexual abuse are shared online **every second** (Child Safety On!, 2023).

The average delay in disclosure is **24 years** (Royal Commission, 2017).

The Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) received over **58,000 reports** of online child sexual exploitation in 2023–24 – a **45% increase** on the previous year.

National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) revealed a **1,325% surge** in child sexual exploitation material reports involving generative AI, **rising from 4,700** in 2023 **to more than 67,000** in 2024.

Sexual extortion ('sextortion') reports rose by **1,332%** between 2018–19 and 2022–23 (eSafety, 2024).

AI-generated CSAM and **sexual deepfakes** are emerging as a fast-growing threat to children's safety online.

FY2024–25
A year of impact

Delivered the **Financial Crime Collaboration Working Group**

Page **12**

Monthly Brown Bags delivered to over 900 attendees

Page **13**

ICMEC Australia Symposium 2024 delivered to over 120 key stakeholders

Page **16**

SaferAI for Children Summit delivered to over 100 stakeholders

Page **18**

Three-part Bank Webinar Series attended by over 65 unique companies

Page **19**

National law enforcement training delivered to over 100 police officers

Page **20**

International law enforcement training delivered to 50 prosecutors in Cambodia

Page **21**

Lighthouse data product launched and operational

Page **23**

Supported three student research programs in partnership with the University of Queensland

Page **24**

Supported the Queensland Police Service in the early-stage groundwork for a new **child protection app**

ARGOS
GUARDIAN

Page **25**

Economic costs of child sexual exploitation and abuse review paper published

Page **27**

Delivered over 15 key stakeholder **presentations**

Page **28**

Attended over 20 key stakeholder **events**

Page **29**

Featured in more than **100 media clippings**, reaching an audience of over **6 million**. We also reached over **1 million impressions** across our social media platforms and strengthened our website visibility with more than **12,000 unique visitors.**

Page **30**

Connect sectors to drive action against CSEA

Combatting CSEA requires more than good intentions – it demands coordinated, informed action across sectors. At ICMEC Australia, we foster collaboration by bringing together voices from government, industry, non-government, and research to address CSEA from all angles. By creating trusted environments for open dialogue and joint problem-solving, we help bridge knowledge gaps, align strategies, and accelerate collective impact. Together, we are building a unified, cross-sector movement committed to protecting children everywhere.

Harnessing collaborative intelligence

The Financial Crime **Collaboration Working Group (CWG)** is a closed-door forum for financial service professionals, law enforcement, and regulators dedicated to enhancing detection of CSEA in financial crime. As the only initiative in Australia solely focused on this issue through the lens of financial intelligence, the CWG provides members with access to cutting-edge resources, expert insights, and a trusted, closed-door space for collaboration.

In 2025, the CWG continued to foster cross-sector innovation and information-sharing, addressing emerging threats and complex harm types through collaborative intelligence. The group welcomed a range of expert presentations, including an overview of NAB's *Human Impact Investigation Guide* by Katelyn Allen, which offered members a practical framework for incorporating victim-centred thinking into financial crime investigations.

Georgia Brookes, also from NAB, led a session on new collaboration models to tackle the growing threat of sextortion, prompting constructive exchanges between institutions on detection, prevention, and victim support.

Additional highlights included a presentation from the Australian Institute of Criminology on their proof-of-concept prediction model for financial risk indicators of child sexual abuse live streaming, and early findings shared by Genevieve Bloxsom from the University of Melbourne on the financial coercion form of self-generated child sexual abuse material. The CWG also explored proactive frameworks, such as *The Third Space,* a paper applying the online operations "kill chain" model to sextortion, co-authored by the Anti-Financial Crime Initiative (AFCI) and the Australian Federal Police.

The CWG continues to demonstrate the unique value of financial intelligence and inter-agency collaboration in protecting children from harm.

Delivering cross-sector insights

Our **Monthly Brown Bag (MBB)** webinars offer an easily accessible and valuable resource for industry professionals. With experts from various sectors featured in each one-hour online session, our stakeholders are provided a quick yet comprehensive look at the latest research, emerging issues, and key industry insights.

We host open sessions, which are inclusive of participants from all related industries, and closed sessions, which provide a space to share confidential information to specific groups.

From July 2024 to June 2025, we hosted seven MBBs, including five open sessions and two closed sessions.

Sextortion of adolescents: What recent research reveals

Op Blackwrist: Overcoming transaction laundering challenges

AI in the Fight Against Child Exploitation: Global Perspectives and Solutions

MBB Recording   September 19, 2024

1,700+
Registrations

900+
Attendees

86%
Average feedback rating

The webinars are an ideal way for busy professionals to stay informed on critical topics and allow them to engage with leading experts in the CSEA response space.

> *Very informative and well laid out, thank you for organising this collaborative space!"*
>
> *"This is my first time attending an ICMEC [Australia] presentation. This was fantastic! Far surpassed my expectations. The statistics were sobering yet insightful. Thank you for facilitating this presentation."*
>
> *"ICMEC [Australia] is meeting a need with these 'Brown Bags'."*
>
> *"Value how organised and informative these are every month – I cancel other meetings in order to come."*
>
> **– MBB ATTENDEES**

Among this year's MBB sessions was a compelling March 2025 presentation by Dr Heather Wolbers from the Australian Institute of Criminology, who shared ground-breaking findings on sextortion among Australian adolescents. Attendees gained critical insights into the growing prevalence of financially motivated sextortion, the platforms exploited, and the barriers victims face in seeking help.

In February 2025, our CEO Colm Gannon offered a rare, behind-the-scenes look at Operation Blackwrist, an international investigation dismantling a dark-web CSAM network. Colm's first-hand account illustrated how cooperation between law enforcement and financial institutions can break complex transaction laundering chains used to fund and conceal child sexual exploitation.

Closed-door sessions also provided relevant stakeholders with trusted spaces to hear directly from law enforcement about real cases focused on evolving financial crime risks, reinforcing the unique value of these webinars in translating frontline intelligence into practical industry awareness.
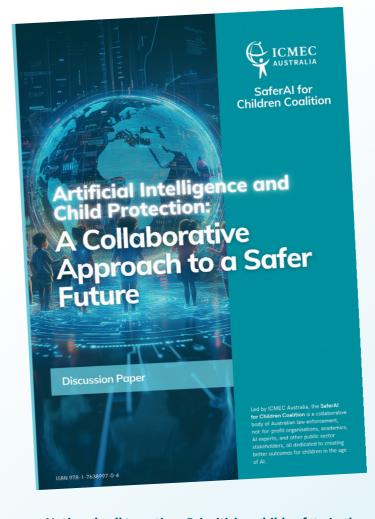
Leading the response to AI-enabled CSEA

Established in 2024, the **SaferAI for Children Coalition** is a cross-sector network of over 25 organisations working to protect children from the rapidly evolving risks posed by artificial intelligence. As AI is increasingly misused to generate child sexual abuse material, facilitate grooming, and evade detection, the Coalition exists to drive coordinated, expert-led action to ensure these technologies are used to protect children, not harm them.

Now into its second year, the Coalition has remained action-focused and grounded in strong, ongoing engagement from our members, who continue to be vital partners in this work. In response to clear gaps identified by the sector, we established a dedicated Education Working Group to help coordinate national awareness of both the sword and the shield of AI in our children's day-to-day lives.

Together, we are shaping a future where child safety is at the centre of AI policy, practice, and innovation. Looking ahead, these flagship outputs position the Coalition to support legislative change, expand education efforts, and continue producing authoritative resources that keep child safety at the heart of Australia's AI ecosystem.

Discussion paper: *Artificial intelligence and child protection: A collaborative approach to a safer future*

Our first flagship output, the *Discussion paper* laid the foundation for the Coalition's agenda. Drawing on expertise across law enforcement, survivor voices, technology, academia, and youth engagement, it set out the emerging threat landscape (CSAM generation, AI-assisted grooming, and rapid distribution) and analysed technical challenges like watermarking limitations and model governance.

Crucially, it also highlighted constructive opportunities: AI-enabled detection, safer product design, and tools that reduce survivor re-traumatisation. By providing clear definitions, legislative gap analysis, and implementation considerations, the *Discussion paper* became a trusted reference point for policymakers and practitioners, informing early agency consultations and training sessions that demystified generative AI mechanics.

National call to action: Prioritising child safety in the age of AI

Released in early 2025, the *National call to action* brought together insights from law enforcement, survivor advocates, technologists, and not-for-profits to emphasise the need for a clear roadmap ahead.

It crystallised complex, fast-moving threats (CSAM production, automated grooming tools, and offender use of anonymisation) while highlighting AI's protective capacity to triage reports, detect previously unidentified victims, and lessen survivor re-traumatisation.

The document has received national attention, helping shape conversations surrounding AI's role in today's child protection ecosystem. It also directly spurred the formation of our Education Working Group, ensuring momentum translated into national awareness and prevention.

ICMEC Australia thanks all the members involved in the SaferAI for Children Coalition for their expertise and time dedicated to this critical issue.

SCAN or CLICK

ICMEC Australia Symposium

In October 2024, ICMEC Australia convened the second annual ICMEC Australia Symposium: Vigilant Disruption of Child Sexual Exploitation in Sydney. Building on the success of our inaugural symposium, this one-day event united senior leaders and experts from financial services, law enforcement, government, academia, and the broader corporate sector to advance the collective fight against CSEA.

The Symposium provided a dynamic forum to advance the collective fight against CSEA.

142
Registrations
Mostly comprised of senior executives

127
Attendees

59
Organisations represented

Key themes addressed:

The financial sector's pivotal role

Cross-sector **unity** in action

Leadership across all levels

Harnessing **technology** and frameworks

Highlights included opening remarks from Australia's eSafety Commissioner, **Julie Inman Grant**, who spoke powerfully about the escalating scale and complexity of CSEA in the digital age and the critical importance of cross-sector collaboration.

This was followed by a candid panel discussion with senior financial crime leaders from Australia's largest banks: **John Fogarty,** Executive General Manager, Financial Crime Compliance at Commonwealth Bank of Australia; **Jodie Arthur,** General Manager of Financial Crime and Group MLRO at Westpac; **Paul Jevtovic** APM OAM, Chief Financial Crime Risk & Group MLRO at NAB; and **Dylan Ryan,** Head of Crime Advisory at ANZ. Together, they explored how strategic leadership, collaboration, and data-sharing can disrupt the financial networks exploited by offenders.

After a full program of discussion and candid reflections presented by numerous experts, we closed with a raw and powerful presentation by **Paul Griffiths,** then Child Victim Identification Manager at Queensland Police Service. Drawing on his frontline experience, Paul highlighted the devastating realities of these crimes and reinforced the critical role all sectors play in detection, reporting and prevention.

Attendees left equipped not only with actionable insights and practical tools, but also with renewed motivation to embed child protection into their organisations and strategies.

> *As technology amplifies threats, we must unite our capabilities – financial intelligence, detection technology, investigative expertise, and, most importantly, make the online environment safe for our most vulnerable. The ICMEC Australia Symposium 2024 provided the essential forum to forge these partnerships and drive action."*

– **TOBY EVANS,** Head of Economic Crime, AusPayNet

We extend our sincere gratitude to our major supporter Westpac, platinum sponsor Norton Rose Fulbright, and gold sponsor SymphonyAI, whose generous support helped bring this important event to life.

> *All of the sessions were very well presented, moderated and/or panel represented. A broad, really interesting and insightful program with a 'no punches pulled' presentation at the end of the day that put the importance and need to disrupt into great context."*

> *"One of the best conferences I have attended in a while."*

– **ATTENDEES**

SaferAI for Children Summit

106 Attendees

21 Speakers

146 Registrations

In October 2024, ICMEC Australia convened the inaugural SaferAI for Children Summit in Sydney, the first national event of its kind focused on protecting children from AI-facilitated harm. The Summit brought together leaders and experts from government, law enforcement, technology, academia, and child protection to examine the growing intersection between AI and child safety.

> *I valued the messaging that our success in combatting this issue is going to be in cross-collaboration, working together to achieve the desired outcome. I also appreciated that everyone in the room was there with the same goals and passion for protecting children."*
> — ATTENDEE

The Summit provided a platform for cross-sector insight-sharing, policy discussion, and forward planning. From live demonstrations of AI safety tools to sobering updates on the scale of AI-generated child sexual abuse material, the event sparked urgent calls for action across multiple fronts.

Highlights included powerful contributions from national and international leaders. **AFP Deputy Commissioner Ian McCartney APM** opened the Summit with a keynote on the increasing prevalence of AI-generated CSAM in Australia and the dual-edged role of AI in both enabling and combatting child sexual abuse. **His Excellency Mr Gabriele Visentin,** EU Ambassador to Australia, shared the European Union's forward- thinking strategies to combat CSEA, spotlighting cross-border collaboration and legislative innovation. His address underscored the need for globally coordinated responses in the digital age.

Paul Griffiths, former Child Victim Identification Manager at Queensland Police Service, provided a frontline perspective on the real-world use of AI in identifying victims of CSAM, while a powerful panel discussion featuring advocate and survivor **Grace Tame** explored the intersection of technology, advocacy, and policy. Adding a critical global lens, organisations including **Thorn, NCMEC,** and the **Tech Coalition,** provided video contributions, sharing insights into international trends, emerging risks, and opportunities for coordinated global action.

> *I think the panels were fantastic and displayed a large range of industry knowledge and experience, alongside first-hand experience from victim-survivors."*
> — ATTENDEE

Key takeaways included:
- The critical role of cross-industry collaboration in tackling complex digital harms
- The need for ethical, AI-enabled tools to support frontline investigators
- Insights from global leaders on legislative responses and platform accountability
- The importance of investing in child-focused AI research and digital literacy

The Summit reinforced Australia's position as a global leader on online safety and laid the groundwork for ongoing collaboration through the SaferAI for Children Coalition.

Equip frontline professionals with knowledge and skills

Frontline professionals play a vital role in detecting, disrupting, and preventing CSEA. At ICMEC Australia, we support these efforts by equipping stakeholders with the latest knowledge, tools, and techniques to respond effectively and ethically. We deliver critical training for law enforcement, financial services, and other corporates to strengthen the child safety ecosystem. By building capability across key sectors, we help ensure that those on the frontline are informed, empowered, and connected - ready to take action when it matters most.

Empowering financial institutions

In 2025, ICMEC Australia collaborated with industry partners to deliver a three-part **Bank Webinar Series** for small to mid-sized banks highlighting CSEA as a growing financial crime risk. The series addressed the unique challenges these institutions face in detecting and preventing CSEA-related transactions, while equipping them with practical tools and insights. We partnered with the Customer Owned Banking Association (COBA) for session 1 to raise awareness of the crime type and reporting obligations. Subsequent sessions featured speakers from Indue, Westpac, NAB, and Hume Bank offering guidance, case studies, insights, and examples of best practices. With 126 new professionals reached through this series alone, the webinars highlighted an appetite for further capacity-building in this space and the vital role smaller institutions play in disrupting harm against children.

246 Registrations

68 Individual companies represented

> *I was privileged to be invited to present at [the] webinar series. The sessions highlighted some of the unique challenges and opportunities for smaller institutions in this space and made it easy for attendees to keep on top of current methods financial threat actors use in this space. The sessions provided the mutual banking sector with approaches and tools they can use to implement and enhance their detection and prevention activities in this complex space."* — BRONWYN MEAD, Data and Intelligence Manager, Financial Crimes and Cyber Resilience, COBA

> *The [...] series was an important reminder for smaller institutions that they are not alone in the challenges they face when it comes to detecting and reporting potential CSEA. The series' focus on practical takeaways made the sessions especially valuable, and it's been encouraging to hear that some teams have already used the insights shared to strengthen their processes to better protect children from harm. I was reminded that while detecting CSEA can be challenging, the care and dedication in this sector is very evident."* — JESSICA PRICE, Manager of AML Operations, Indue

> *I feel [...] more confident than initially, and am now thinking of developing a process based on Jessica's presentation, to help us better investigate such alerts. So, the session was very helpful."* — WEBINAR ATTENDEE

Uplifting first responders

At ICMEC Australia, we believe training is key to prevention. In 2024–25, we delivered and supported targeted **law enforcement training** programs across Australia and internationally, empowering frontline professionals with the tools, techniques, and trauma-informed knowledge to better respond to child sexual exploitation.

National training highlights:

BE THE SOLUTION: VICTIM-CENTRIC TRAINING

In August 2024, ICMEC Australia sponsored specialised training for 47 officers from NSW Police, Victoria Police, and the AFP. Delivered in Sydney and Melbourne, the program focused on trauma-informed and victim-centric approaches to child sexual abuse investigations.

> **100%** of survey respondents said the training was helpful to them and their line of work.
> **60%** of survey respondents rated the training as excellent with another **35%** rating it as good.

> *Overall, really crucial information for AFP members interacting with victims, potential victims, and their families."*
> — BE THE SOLUTION ATTENDEE

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK TRAINING

As part of National Child Protection Week 2024, ICMEC Australia sponsored an intensive, week-long program led by the Child Rescue Coalition at Monash University. Attended by 28 officers from agencies nationwide, this training focused on peer-to-peer network investigations and a 'train-the-trainer' model to scale impact.

> Over **90%** of survey respondents rated this training as excellent.

> *Trainers were very knowledgeable, experienced and helpful. I took a lot away from the week and learned so many new things. Being able to network with other states and agencies has been invaluable."*
> — NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK TRAINING ATTENDEE

COSEC TRAINING (COMBATTING ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN)

In January 2025, ICMEC Australia supported the Queensland Police Service to deliver a 10-day Europol-led COSEC training course in Sydney. Officers from every Australian state and territory, as well as New Zealand, took part in sessions focused on live case analysis and operational collaboration. The program empowered participants to take the content back to their own jurisdictions through a train-the-trainer model.

International training highlights:

CAMBODIA: CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN WORKSHOP

In October 2024, ICMEC Australia delivered targeted training to 50 Cambodian prosecutors and judges as part of the Crimes Against Children Workshop in Phnom Penh. This initiative was funded by the Australian Attorney-General's Department and DFAT, in partnership with the Cambodian Ministry of Justice.

> **Led by ICMEC Australia's Head of Data, Warren Bulmer, the training focused on open-source intelligence (OSINT), digital evidence, and modern investigative techniques in cases involving child sexual exploitation. The workshop aimed to strengthen prosecutorial outcomes by sharing global best practices, tools, and protocols.**

While in Cambodia, ICMEC Australia also deepened relationships with key stakeholders to better understand local capacities and challenges in addressing these crimes.

MALAYSIA: CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

In February 2025, ICMEC Australia's Senior Capacity and Prevention Coordinator, Ashley Carvalho, participated in a two-week training program hosted by IJM's Center to End Online Sexual Exploitation of Children in Kuala Lumpur.

While ICMEC Australia was not a delivery partner for this event, Ashley's participation as a presenter and observer provided valuable insight into Malaysia's evolving approach to combatting online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC). The program included dedicated sessions for prosecutors and a specialist track for the Royal Malaysian Police's Internet Crimes Against Children unit.

> **This engagement enhanced ICMEC Australia's understanding of regional trends, supported knowledge exchange, and strengthened collaboration with international partners working to end child sexual exploitation.**

Champion safe innovation to develop tools to detect, disrupt, and prevent CSEA

Innovation can be a powerful force for child protection, when guided by safety, ethics, and collaboration. At ICMEC Australia, we work at the intersection of technology, research, and practice to drive the development of solutions that actively detect, disrupt and prevent CSEA. We develop resources to address known challenges and gaps, with a focus on real-world application and measurable impact. By supporting safe, evidence-based innovation, we help shape a digital and physical environment where children are better protected – now and into the future.

Staying ahead of emerging technologies

An insights piece from Dr Janis Dalins, Head of Emerging Technology, ICMEC Australia

After more than two decades working across law enforcement, digital forensics, and AI, I have come to believe that protecting children in a digital world is not just about responding to harm. It is about anticipating it. That belief is what brought me to ICMEC Australia. This role gives me the opportunity to take a more proactive approach to child protection, with a focus on early detection, responsible innovation, and practical solutions.

Technology is not inherently good or bad. Its impact depends on how it is developed, applied, and regulated. While we have seen generative AI deliver positive outcomes in areas such as education and accessibility, we are also seeing how it can be misused. Tools that create deepfakes, automate grooming, or generate synthetic child abuse material are now more accessible than ever.

The real challenge lies in the speed of technological change. New tools are released faster than we can fully assess the risks. Of particular concern is the convergence of powerful generative tools with

always-on computing. This combination makes it easier to scale harmful activity in ways we are only beginning to understand.

At ICMEC Australia, we are strengthening our internal systems to keep pace. We are focused on building secure and accountable processes to test and deploy tools to help frontline professionals detect and prevent abuse.

This work depends on collaboration. We engage with child protection experts, technologists, and industry partners to ensure that what we build is useful, ethical, and effective. I have seen too many promising ideas fall short because developers did not take the time to understand the real-world context. Listening and learning from others is key to success.

We do not believe that any one organisation or sector can solve this problem alone. Our role is to bring people together, translate emerging technologies into practical solutions, and support those working to protect children. That is how we create meaningful change.

Lighting the way with data

This year saw the transformation from a data product concept into a fully operational ready software application – **Lighthouse.** Since launching, Lighthouse has been fuelled by additional data sources, advanced search capabilities, as well as one-of-a-kind analytics, for both the public and private sectors' frontline efforts to detect and disrupt child sexual exploitation activities.

The purpose of Lighthouse is not to compete with existing tools or technologies, but rather support them with added intelligence, visualisations, trends, and some social network analysis. Our dozens of Lighthouse users are able to quickly query millions of records to look for matches that may shed light on what they need to support or advance an investigation or a suspicious activity.

'Big Data' problems require 'Big Data' solutions

Lighthouse processes and ingests data from world-leading providers relating to the suspected access, distribution, dissemination, and possession of CSAM. These artefacts can provide clues of where these activities are occurring and some indicators of who may be participating in these crimes. This type of intelligence is pertinent to other workflows and processes undertaken by financial services institutions, law enforcement, and other relevant stakeholders.

From 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025

Lighthouse ingested and processed just under **8 million** records relating to suspected child sexual exploitation activities from a variety of internet sources.

Our daily record count grew from an average of approx. **16,000** records per day in 2024 to an average of over **20,000** records per day in 2025. A trend that we believe will continue to spike based on our modelling.

We identified over **70,000** records to be originating from Australia through our use of modern geolocation tools and databases built into Lighthouse. *Lighthouse users can benefit from these geographic indicators in both their proactive and reactive efforts to identify risks to children or the community.*

What can we learn from Lighthouse?

The coming year for Lighthouse will provide a new avenue of impact and contribution to child protection for ICMEC Australia. Partnering with both the University of Tasmania and the University of Queensland, academic study of Lighthouse data may shed light on patterns or predictable behaviours of those who engage in the online access and distribution of CSAM.

The insights gleaned from this research are intended to inform development of more targeted prevention strategies and optimise resource allocation based on trends associated with specific internet-based CSAM offending. This work makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing global effort to understand and disrupt the online dissemination of CSAM through analysis of large datasets, while also outlining the strengths and limitations of known data-driven methodologies.

Generating new insights and nurturing tomorrow's voices

ICMEC Australia is proud to partner with Australian universities to support **student-led research** that tackles emerging child protection challenges. These projects not only contribute valuable insights to the sector but also help develop the next generation of researchers and practitioners in the fight against CSEA.

Exploring the social, policy, and legal implications of AI-generated child sexual abuse material

In 2024, five final-year students from the Bachelor of Social Science program at the University of Queensland completed a year-long applied research project in collaboration with ICMEC Australia. ICMEC Australia supported the students by helping to facilitate interviews with industry experts and providing real-world context for their research. The research highlights the urgent need for legislative clarity and cross-sector collaboration to address the risks of AI-generated abuse content. Full report and summary available on ICMEC Australia's website.

SCAN or CLICK

Knowledge, control, and strangers: Prevention messaging for young people

In 2024–25, ICMEC Australia partnered with master's student Shakira Memorey to support a 10-month research project exploring the themes and messages in online-facilitated CSEA prevention resources aimed at young people, parents, and carers. Her project critically examined whether existing primary prevention materials align with the cognitive, social, and developmental realities of how young people use the internet, as well as how offenders exploit technology. The research recommends a shift toward prevention tools that support, rather than restrict, young people's agency and self-confidence online. Full report and summary available on ICMEC Australia's website.

SCAN or CLICK

Investigating the use of 'nudifying apps'

ICMEC Australia commenced a partnership with a group of third-year criminology students from the University of Queensland's Applied Research in Criminology and Criminal Justice program. This in-progress project explores the emerging use of nudifying apps, AI-powered tools used to non-consensually generate sexualised images, and their implications for abuse, privacy, and policy. This project is underway, with findings expected in late 2025.

Supporting innovative tech for child safety

In 2024, we supported the Queensland Police Service by providing dedicated expertise and resourcing to help develop a robust business case for a groundbreaking digital solution designed to improve child safety outcomes – the Argos Guardian app. The proposed app aims to empower parents with trusted information and tools, enhance child protection efforts, streamline reporting pathways, and facilitate real-time collaboration among key frontline stakeholders, including law enforcement, educators, and child safety professionals.

Our team provided strategic and technical expertise across multiple domains, including technology architecture, data governance, and project management. We played a critical role in scoping the legal and privacy frameworks required to ensure the app meets the highest standards of ethical and secure data handling. Additionally, we facilitated the design of a user-centred interface that prioritises accessibility, clarity, and functionality, ensuring the app can be effectively used by diverse communities and frontline users alike.

By helping to lay the groundwork for this initiative, our contribution supports a scalable and sustainable digital infrastructure that will help protect vulnerable children, empower informed caregiving, and strengthen cross-agency coordination across Queensland and beyond.

> *Working with ICMEC Australia has been one of the most affirming and productive collaborations of my career. From the outset, your team understood the vision behind Argos Guardian and created the space to explore what the project could become beyond the constraints of government structures.*
>
> *ICMEC's support went far beyond logistics or governance – it gave the project credibility and a clear sense that we were on the right path. The belief your team showed in Argos Guardian's potential made a real difference, sustaining momentum at critical moments.*
>
> *ICMEC's reputation and network opened doors and sparked conversations that might not have happened otherwise. From the beginning, it was clear your team shared a deep commitment to child protection, and that values alignment was instrumental in shaping the initiative's direction.*
>
> *Most importantly, ICMEC treated Argos Guardian not as 'just another project', but as something worth investing in, evolving, and championing. That belief continues to shape how I talk about the initiative and how I approach its next phase of development."*

— STEVE TAYLOR, Detective A/Sergeant, Argos, Queensland Police Service

Understanding the economic costs of online child sexual exploitation and abuse

In 2025, ICMEC Australia proudly launched a landmark piece of research: *Costs of online child sexual exploitation and abuse in Australia: An initial review*. This foundational study, delivered in partnership with the University of Queensland, represents the first step in understanding the complex economic impact of online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) across Australia.

Led by Dr Jonah Rimer, Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Convenor of Postgraduate Cyber Criminology at the University of Queensland, the research team, including co-author Ethan Callaway, PhD candidate and Senior Research Assistant, developed a comprehensive framework to define and catalogue the various costs associated with OCSEA. These costs were broadly defined as any impact with a monetary, financial, economic, or expenditure consequence.

> **The review identified 73 distinct types of costs likely associated with this crime, ranging from direct victim support and justice system expenditure to indirect societal and long-term health impacts. Of these, publicly accessible (though not necessarily complete) data could be found for only 10 cost types, primarily related to justice administration and child protection services. This stark data gap underscores the need for greater transparency, data-sharing, and cross-sector collaboration in future research phases.**

SCAN or CLICK

This report marks the completion of **phase 1** of a multi-phase research initiative aimed at ultimately quantifying the total economic burden of OCSEA in Australia. Looking ahead, ICMEC Australia is actively exploring opportunities to develop **phase 2** of this critical project. Future phases will seek to deepen the evidence base, fill key data gaps, and build an accurate, nationally-informed understanding of the true cost of this crime. To do this, industry engagement will be essential.

The full report and summary materials are publicly available on ICMEC Australia's website.

Launching the OCSEA economic costs report

To mark the release of the *Costs of online child sexual exploitation and abuse in Australia: An initial review*, ICMEC Australia hosted a special networking and research launch event in Brisbane. The event brought together 37 attendees from across law enforcement, academia, government, and not-for-profit organisations, all united by a shared commitment to advancing child protection through evidence-based solutions.

The evening featured insights from Professor Lynda Cheshire, Head of the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland, and Dr Jonah Rimer, Senior Lecturer in Criminology and lead author of the research. Their remarks underscored how rigorous, independent research plays a pivotal role in driving systemic change, influencing policy, and identifying real-world interventions.

> **Three key themes emerged from the night:**
>
> **1.** The importance of research to inform best practice in child protection
> **2.** The role of evidence as a catalyst for social and policy change
> **3.** The value of industry-university partnerships in bridging the gap between theory and action

The event served not only as a launch but also as a reminder of the vibrant, multidisciplinary network working tirelessly to keep children safe.

> *Day-to-day, most of us toil away in our respective silos, not sure if we're making much of a difference. It can become somewhat disheartening. These sorts of events remind us that there's plenty of highly intelligent, hardworking, decent people working in this space who are genuinely committed to making kids and the community safer. It's motivating."*
>
> **– ATTENDEE**

The success of the event highlighted the power of connection, shared purpose, and the momentum building behind this vital research agenda.

Promote child protection as a key consideration for policy and practice

Throughout the year, ICMEC Australia participated in a range of sector-leading events, engaging with diverse audiences to highlight the evolving risks of CSEA and the opportunities for meaningful action. By contributing to conferences, panels, and strategic dialogues, we amplified the importance of cross-sector collaboration and kept child protection on the agenda in critical spaces. These engagements help shape national and global responses and strengthen partnerships that drive real-world impact.

Presentations delivered:

- Amazon Web Services (AWS) IMAGINE: Non-profit conference event
- Attorney-Generals Department training and presentations in Cambodia
- Corporate Awareness Programs to ANZ and ING
- International Association of Financial Crimes Investigators (IAFCI) Annual Symposium 2024
- Introduction to Lighthouse Closed Session
- Optus Learning Fiesta Cyberbullying, Child Safety and AI Technology
- Queensland Police Service Covert Practitioner's Day
- Thomson Reuters Legal Australia 7th Annual Australian Regulatory Summit on Social Responsibility: Tackling Online Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking in Asia-Pacific
- University of Queensland Cyber Criminology lecture and panel
- Westpac's Financial Crime Surveillance Team
- Commonwealth Bank's Financial Crime and Operations Team
- Youth Technology and Virtual Communities Conference (YTVC) 2024

Events attended:

- Act for Children Campaign Town Hall
- Artificial Intelligence for Law Enforcement and Community Safety (AiLECS) Child Protection Symposium
- AiLECS Agenda Moot Court Showcase, AI on trial
- AiLECS Moot Court Trial Showcase
- Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (ACAMS) Australasian Chapter event – International financial sector alliance against modern slavery
- AusPayNet Summit
- Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) Stakeholder Operational Briefing and end of year function
- Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) On Us: Australian Business Coalition for Safeguarding Children launch of the Child Safeguarding Principles
- Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) conference
- British High Commissioner's farewell at NSW Parliament
- Child Protection in the Age of AI Panel UNSW
- Daniel Morcombe Foundation's Bright Futures ACT Workshop in Canberra
- NSW & SA Government's Social Media Summit
- NSW Anti-Slavery Forum in November
- Optus facilitated panel
- Shadows of the Web documentary screening Brisbane
- Shadows of the Web documentary screening Sydney
- South x Southwest Conference
- Westpac Women in Business OpenAir Cinema networking event
- Youth Technology and Virtual Communities Conference (YTVC) 2024

Raising awareness through marketing and communications

At ICMEC Australia, strategic marketing and communications play a crucial role in enhancing our impact. Our goal is to amplify our message, shape public discourse, and engage stakeholders across various sectors, including finance, technology, government, corporations, academia, law enforcement, and broader society. We aim to ensure that the fight against CSEA remains a national priority.

Our marketing and communication efforts play a vital role in shaping ICMEC Australia's narrative and enhancing our brand identity. These initiatives also empower our staff to communicate our mission more effectively, ensuring consistency in messaging and amplifying the impact of our work. This included onboarding and media training for our new CEO, Colm Gannon, to establish him as a credible and confident spokesperson.

As a result, these initiatives have improved the consistency of our messaging, enhanced our profile, and amplified the effectiveness of our advocacy efforts.
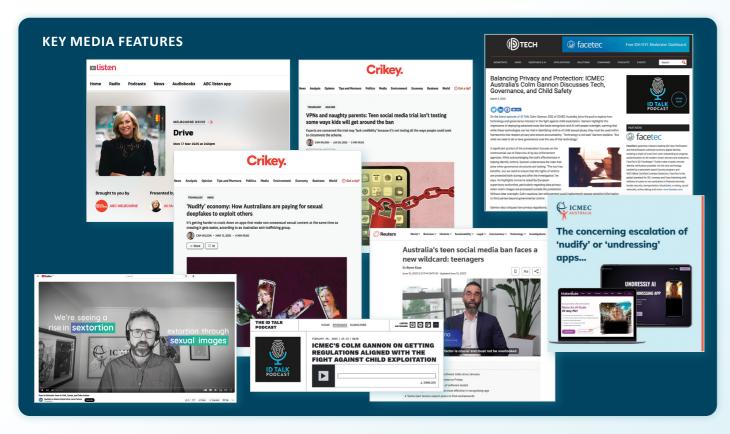
Media reach and influence

SCAN or CLICK

This year, ICMEC Australia appeared in over 100 media clippings, reaching over six million impressions. We actively pitch to journalists, with our CEO, Colm Gannon, becoming a trusted authority on CSEA.

As part of our content strategy, we have written op-eds to influence public debate and establish ICMEC Australia as a leader in the sector. Our op-ed on age assurance, published on our website and shared through our social media channels, attracted global attention through Reuters and was featured by 26 outlets, including the Daily Mail, Yahoo, US News, MSN, The Standard (Hong Kong), and India Times. This effort positioned Australia as a leader in discussions about online child safety and reinforced ICMEC Australia's authority in the Australian and international dialogue.

We gained strong coverage in various media outlets, including on the ID Talk and Quoria podcasts, Crikey, and ABC Radio Drive. This allowed us to connect with a broader audience across Australia, including tech leaders, parents, and educators.

KEY MEDIA FEATURES

Social and digital media impact

In the last year, the growth of our online community has significantly broadened our reach and influence beyond our established networks. Our campaigns attracted diverse audiences across finance, business development, education, law enforcement, protective services, IT, and media. Our goal is to educate, spark dialogue, and amplify key issues while delivering content that feels fresh, relevant, and newsworthy.

Since launching Instagram in August 2024, we've **reached over 30,000 accounts** and **increased monthly views by 51%**, enhancing our engagement with advocates and raising awareness of ICMEC Australia's mission. Our largest audience falls within the age group of 25 to 44.

On LinkedIn, our presence is steadily growing, allowing us to connect with influential voices and increase visibility in the child protection sector. Tech journalists and industry leaders have amplified key posts, establishing us as experts in issues related to CSEA.

A standout example of our impact is our LinkedIn post highlighting our research on 'nudify' apps. This post garnered over 50,000 impressions and sparked considerable engagement, with **13 reposts** and **170 clicks.** Its reach caught the eye of prominent tech journalists, effectively amplifying ICMEC Australia's voice in the critical national dialogue surrounding online harms. This post not only enhanced our visibility but also solidified our position as trusted subject matter experts in the field.

Our LinkedIn content generated nearly **800,000 impressions, 6,000 reactions, 236 comments**, and **163 reposts,** reflecting strong engagement and reach across our professional network. We grew by **1,200 followers,** representing a **37% increase** from the previous year. We have grown to be recognised among the top five not-for-profits in similar sectors.

We publish a regular newsletter that highlights our work, impact, and partnerships, and it is fast becoming a key channel for engagement. Over the year, our subscriber base grew from 1,471 to 2,135, a **45% increase**, expanding our reach and strengthening connections with supporters across sectors, particularly within finance and law enforcement.

Video content and thought leadership

A corporate video was created to spotlight leaders in financial services and payments, emphasising child protection as a key social responsibility and a priority in environmental, social, and governance initiatives. This collaboration demonstrated our influence in the industry, reaching over 36,000 viewers and achieving a significant engagement rate among key influencers.

The video content created for the SaferAI and Symposium events highlighted our staff as experts and underscored the significance of education and collaboration. With over 16,000 impressions and 190 clicks on LinkedIn, we demonstrated our commitment to empowering stakeholders with knowledge, resources, and connections to ensure that technology is not used to harm children.

Website performance

Recognising the need for a stronger digital platform, we redesigned and rebuilt our website to better showcase our work and engage supporters. Since the launch, the site has successfully turned awareness into action, attracting nearly 12,000 new visitors and resulting in over 120,000 search impressions. Improved SEO and enhanced functionality have significantly boosted supporter engagement and led to sustained traffic growth on key advocacy, event, news, and resource pages.

Our Board

Jodie Arthur
Non-Executive Director

Based in Melbourne, Jodie Arthur serves as the General Manager of Financial Crime at Westpac and Group MLRO. She joined the bank in 2020, bringing with her extensive experience from her previous role as Regional Head of Financial Crime Compliance at Standard Chartered Bank in Singapore. Jodie's career also includes more than a decade at ANZ Bank, where she held diverse positions across Internal Audit, Compliance, and Financial Crime. Earlier in her professional journey, she worked with Ernst & Young in London, UK.

Jeremy Moller
Board Chair

Jeremy Moller is a Sydney-based risk advisory lawyer with more than 15 years of international experience spanning Australia, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand. His legal expertise centres on anti-money laundering (AML), counter-terrorism financing (CTF), and international sanctions. Jeremy regularly engages with both domestic and global regulatory bodies, including Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre. Jeremy contributes to the field through several key professional roles, including membership in the Law Council of Australia's AML/CTF Working Group, the NSW Law Society's AML/CTF Working Group and Ethics Committee, and the Advisory Board of the Australasian Chapter of ACAMS (Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists).

Jon Rouse APM
Non-Executive Director

Jon Rouse is internationally recognised as a leading voice in the fight against child sexual exploitation, with a distinguished 39-year career in law enforcement with the Queensland Police Service. For 26 of those years, he led the renowned Taskforce Argos, driving major advancements in child protection. His work has earned him numerous accolades, including the Champion for Children Award from ICMEC in 2018 and the honour of being named Queensland Australian of the Year in 2019. Jon is also the recipient of multiple state and national police awards and serves as an ambassador for several Australian child protection organisations. In December 2022, he joined the ICMEC Australia Board, continuing his lifelong mission to safeguard children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

Melissa Stewart
Non-Executive Director

Melissa Stewart is a recognised expert in modern slavery, business and human rights, and responsible investment. With over 24 years of experience, she has held senior advisory roles globally across the United Nations, government, ASX-listed companies, and not-for-profits, including as Head of Trafficking in Persons & Child Protection at World Vision Australia. Her work has focused on preventing human trafficking, advancing human rights, and advising on policy and legislative responses to modern slavery and child exploitation. In the private sector, she has supported ethical investment, sustainable supply chains, and responsible business operations. A qualified lawyer, Melissa holds advanced degrees in human rights law and international development, with a BA in International Development Studies and an LLB (JD equivalent) from the University of British Columbia. She began her career as a corporate lawyer in Canada and Thailand. In 2013, she received Anti-Slavery Australia's Freedom Award for her leadership in combatting modern slavery.

Our team

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Colm Gannon – CEO

You have worked across frontline policing, digital safety, and international child protection. How have these experiences shaped your leadership at ICMEC Australia?

Each stage of my career has offered a different lens on what it takes to protect children. In policing, I saw first-hand the human impact of abuse and how quickly offenders exploit gaps in our systems. My work in digital safety and international operations highlighted the scale of the issue online and the importance of coordination across borders. Later, through roles in product development and AI policy, I gained insight into how emerging technologies can be used both to cause harm and to drive solutions.

These experiences have shaped my leadership at ICMEC Australia. I bring a practical and evidence-based approach, paired with a strong belief in innovation and collaboration. The issues we face are complex, but I focus on building solutions that are forward-looking and grounded in real-world practice.

ICMEC Australia exists to bring together professionals from across sectors, including technology, finance, law enforcement, and policy, and to show how each can contribute to preventing harm. I lead with purpose, and I remain optimistic because I have seen what is possible when people work together to protect children.

Rosie Campo – Head of Corporate Engagement

What is the most surprising thing you have learned from bringing different sectors together?

One of the most surprising and encouraging things I've learned is how quickly a shared sense of purpose can emerge, even among organisations that might normally see themselves as competitors. When the goal is protecting children, the usual barriers come down, and people are willing to share, collaborate, and innovate in ways they might never do elsewhere. There's a genuine willingness to share insights and resources for the greater good, which has been incredibly powerful to witness and be part of.

At ICMEC Australia, over the past two years, I've focused on building and deepening our presence within the financial services sector – bringing together banks, payment providers, crypto platforms, remitters, credit cards, and fintechs to strengthen the industry's response to child sexual exploitation and abuse. Looking ahead, we are expanding that collaboration beyond the traditional players to include Tranche 2 entities of the AML/CTF regime – such as accountants, lawyers, and real estate professionals – as well as reaching into new sectors like travel and tourism. By bringing these sectors into the conversation, we are unlocking fresh perspectives and new pathways to disrupt abuse and helping them recognise the critical role they can play in protecting children, often for the first time.

Dr Janis Dalins – Head of Emerging Technology

How has your previous experience shaped your approach to tech and safety?

It will surprise absolutely no-one who's met me that at my core I'm a bit of a tech-head. I played around on bulletin boards via dial-up modems in the early 1990s and was the first person I knew to have an email address. I started out as a software developer before I joined the Australian Federal Police, so my time in areas such as Digital Forensics gave me direct exposure to the misuse of technologies that I personally had used for years and quite frankly, like!

This is perhaps why I take a neutral approach to technology – I don't see individual innovations as good or bad, just presenting potential risks and rewards. As any member of the community, operators and developers have a moral obligation to understand these factors when building and distributing their products. Suffice to say, this is where contention starts – an objective, permanent balance between freedoms and harm prevention is impossible to establish, but an accountable, understandable level of regulation and response is.

My childhood in technology was a far simpler and safer space than for the kids of today. As adults, it's our responsibility to give today's kids that same experience.

Elisabeth Drysdale – Head of Marketing, Communications & Media

What is one shift in public perception you believe is crucial to creating long-term change in this space?

Talking about CSEA can make people uncomfortable, and many would rather avoid the topic. Pitching stories to media can be even harder. I've had editors of major publications tell me the subject is too "dark" for their audiences. But ignoring it doesn't make it go away. The reality is confronting with almost one in four Australians having experienced contact child sexual abuse, according to the latest ACMS study.

As communicators, we have a responsibility to shift public perception and keep this issue visible, even when it is uncomfortable. Silence doesn't protect children. Acknowledging the scale of the problem is the first step toward building systems that protect children.

We need to move from seeing CSEA as an uncomfortable, niche issue to recognising it as a systemic problem that requires collective action from every part of society.

Effective communication plays a critical role in creating this shift. We need to frame the issue not as hopeless but as solvable with collective action. By telling stories that balance the realities of harm with the possibilities for change, we can build the public and political will needed to strengthen laws, invest in prevention, and drive innovation to protect children.

Dannielle Kelly – Head of Capacity & Prevention

What is one thing frontline professionals tell you they wish more people understood?

When I talk to frontline child protection professionals, one thing they say again and again is this: we can't prevent every instance of this horrific crime, but one powerful thing we can do is talk to our kids about safety. Open communication is everything. If a child makes a mistake online, sends a photo, gets themselves into a difficult situation, it can be fixed. Nothing is ever too big to face together. But those conversations have to start early, and they have to be ongoing. Simple rules make a big difference: for me that's: no phones in bedrooms at night, no closed doors with devices, and lots of communicating. If a child feels safe talking to you, they are more likely to speak up when something feels wrong. That one moment of trust might be the thing that can prevent further exploitation.

ICMEC AUSTRALIA

OUR BROADER TEAM

Griselda Afonso	Senior Manager Accounts and Office Manager
Jacqueline Bottner	Corporate Engagement Coordinator
Warren Bulmer	Technical Lead – Lighthouse
Ashley Carvalho	Senior Capacity and Prevention Coordinator
Mikaela Jago	Senior Capacity and Prevention Coordinator
Julia Kiss	Social Impact Manager
Charlotte Raspass	Corporate Engagement Coordinator
Aravind Reddy	Senior Data Engineer
Praniha Reddy Vari	Business Intelligence Engineer
Ash Skalecky	Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Join us in creating a safer future for children

At ICMEC Australia, we are working to create a world where technology cannot be used to harm children.

As an independent not-for-profit, we bring together sectors and professionals across industries to break down silos and drive system-wide solutions. Our mission is to strengthen those working to detect, disrupt, and prevent child sexual exploitation and abuse – but this work depends on collective responsibility turned into meaningful action.

We have made real progress. But to sustain it, we need your voice, your support, and your partnership.

Three ways you can take action today:

1. Partner with us

We work with governments, corporate industry leaders, researchers and non-government partners to prevent harm before it happens. Join us in building long-term, system-wide impact.

2. Amplify the mission

Follow us on LinkedIn and Instagram. Share our work. Help raise awareness and keep child protection at the centre of AI, technology, and policy conversations.

in *icmecaustralia*

◎ *@icmec_australia*

3. Donate

Your contribution helps us train frontline responders, develop technology-driven solutions, and advocate for stronger protections for children in the digital age.

We are calling on corporate partners, government agencies, and funders to join us in building a future where children are safe online — because preventing harm to children requires collective action and sustained investment.

SCAN or CLICK to discuss how you can partner with us.

Our collaboration with ICMEC has been invaluable in the efforts to combat the exploitation and sexual abuse of children. We are proud to continue to support these efforts to create a safer world for children locally, regionally, and globally." **– DAMIAN GOULD,** MoneyGram APAC Regional Compliance Manager

LET'S BUILD THAT FUTURE — TOGETHER

Creating a world where technology cannot be used to harm children requires more than innovation. It takes collective resolve. Now is the time to act – not later, not when it is easier, but now."
— **COLM GANNON,** CEO, ICMEC Australia

Acknowledgement and thank you

Glossary

Child sexual abuse material (CSAM)

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 Abuse Material: Model Legislation & Global Review 2018).

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 offences, 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.

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.

Online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC)

The sexual abuse of a child that is partly or entirely facilitated by technology.

Child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA)

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.

Citations and references

Australian Child Maltreatment Study (ACMS) (2023)
The first Australian Child Maltreatment Study: Key findings report. Queensland University of Technology.

Child Safety On! (2023)
Two images every second: The scale of online child sexual abuse material.

eSafety Commissioner (2024)
eSafety Annual Report 2022–2023. Australian Government.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) (2024)
CyberTipline 2024 Mid-Year Data Summary.

Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) (2024)
Annual Report 2023–24. Australian Federal Police.

eSafety Commissioner (2024)
Artificial intelligence and child sexual exploitation online: Emerging harms report.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017)
Final Report. Australian Government.

ICMEC
AUSTRALIA

Creating a world where

technology cannot be

used to harm children

info@icmec.org.au

icmec.org.au

icmecaustralia

icmec_australia