

MEDIA RELEASE – 4 OCTOBER 2016

Stop funding \$1.65b to dishonest childcare

The Australian Childcare Alliance New South Wales (ACA NSW) strongly supports with the Federal Government's actions of cracking down corrupt operators purporting to provide quality early childcare education and care services.

However, ACA NSW is still demanding more actions, including greater collaboration between federal, state and local governments, consistent yet streamlined accountability and transparency standards imposed on all childcare services, and industry engagement via a properly resourced dob-in line.

“Stopping non-compliances that cheat Australian taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars mean having such funds redirected back to genuine children and their families who need support provided by legitimate and professional childcare services, including long daycare centres,” said Mr Chiang Lim, CEO of ACA NSW.

According to the Commonwealth's Department of Education, the estimated amounts of non-compliances were about \$400m in 2012/2013, \$700m in 2013/2014, and \$550m in 2014/2015.

Mr Lim said, “although we do not represent Family Daycare services, we are certain all childcare service providers and peak bodies are united against those dishonest enough to deliberately put children at risk, cheat, as well as discredit our profession.”

Recognising the delineation of responsibilities between federal and state governments as being the provider of funds versus regulatory compliance (not to mention the different approaches between state jurisdictions), it would appear there still are areas of improvements that can help identify the activities of dishonest operators that exploit inconsistent rules and regulations that apply to different types of childcare service providers.

“While we suspect government departments have begun data analyses in order to detect suspicious behaviours, peak bodies like the Australian Childcare Alliance remain willing to work with all three tiers of governments, especially in ensuring high, consistent and streamlined accountability and transparency requirements, incorporating a criminal record check into national Working With Children Checks, leveraging local governments' planning and compliance powers, and an effective dob-in line,” said Mr Lim.

Australian Childcare Alliance New South Wales is the peak body for privately owned early childhood education and care services in NSW, numbering approximately 1,100 long daycare services and supporting over 100,000 families. ACA NSW provides advocacy, policy and regulatory support and advice, member services and professional development for members across the state.

***** END *****

**For further media inquiries,
please contact ACA NSW CEO Chiang Lim on 0427 277 299.**