Nationwide Assessment of CCTV in ECEC settings - Executive Report

Child Safety Reform Group

4 September 2026

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Expert Panel



Executive report

The Nationwide Assessment of Closed-circuit television (CCTV) in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings (the Assessment) was conducted to provide an evidence base for policy decisions on the potential use of CCTV to strengthen child safety outcomes, and to inform the development of best-practice guidance. Nous Group (Nous) was engaged to design and conduct the Assessment on behalf of all Australian governments over eight months from October 2025.

This appears to be one of the first attempts by any national government to thoroughly explore the value of CCTV in ECEC settings through a structured Assessment.[1] The literature is thin, and there has been no analysis of specific use cases until now.

The Assessment was based on a sample of some 309 ECEC services, 160 of which participated actively through fortnightly reporting. While small in the context of the ECEC sector, the sample was determined to be broadly representative of ECEC services with CCTV installed.[2] That said, as all participating services had CCTV installed already and showed an active interest in the issue, there is likely a slant towards those at the more mature end of CCTV adoption and use.

Overall, the Assessment finds that, when CCTV equipment is of a suitable quality and installed appropriately,[3] it can:

- Strengthen safety through both helping regulators in their investigative and enforcement role and improving services' ability to maintain compliance with quality and safety standards
- Reveal safety risks that can be addressed pre-emptively, thereby delivering a preventative effect, particularly with respect to neglect and physical injury (as opposed to sexual harm)
- Contribute to reflective practice and thereby inform both quality and safety improvements
- Increase confidence among families that incidents can be appropriately investigated and reviewed
- Assuage staff concerns that they will be subject to ill-founded allegations or complaints
- Produce some unintended benefits, for example in relation to child protection matters.

However, to fully realise those benefits and to manage risks to privacy and cybersecurity, the sector needs clearer guidance and practical resources on:

1. Procuring and installing equipment and systems, including guidance on basic hardware specifications
2. Developing and maintaining appropriate privacy and data management policies
3. Monitoring models that, where possible, might be used to inform improved practices.

Beyond issuing guidance, governments might also consider how to improve the consistency in interpretation of current National Law, along with state and territory surveillance legislation governing CCTV use in ECEC settings, and supporting regulatory authorities (RAs), as far as is practicable, to develop more consistent approaches to data retention, obtaining and sharing footage, and tracking when and how CCTV is used, while recognising that full consistency may not be possible.

In the context of broader reforms to the sector, governments and sector leaders should remain cognisant of the benefits that CCTV can deliver given the right privacy and data protections, and crucially, the right workforce culture and judgements about appropriateness to context. CCTV cannot and should not replace active supervision by trained educators and carers, and should instead be viewed as one of several tools that may strengthen broader child safeguarding. While the contribution of CCTV to broader safeguarding is evident, it is important to note that the risks and costs involved may not warrant use in all circumstances.

[1] Note that the UK Government is currently conducting a Public Inquiry into Safeguarding in ECEC, which is considering the role that CCTV might play. Further information available here: Early Years: Improving Support for Children and Families - Committees - UK Parliament. Other governments, including Singapore, South Korea, and some US states (such as Minnesota), have explored or implemented various CCTV policies in ECEC settings, including mandated CCTV use in some jurisdictions. However, the Assessment has not identified any

CCTV use in the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector in Australia is at about 23–30 per cent[4] and growing. Three of the largest providers are implementing it across their networks, or actively piloting CCTV use as a matter of policy. Meanwhile, a majority of the 309 services that participated in the Assessment reported that parents often expect CCTV to be installed, seeing it as a signal of services' commitment to safety, and as a mechanism to properly investigate an incident. Parents surveyed confirmed this view.

In this context, it is important to understand whether CCTV is being used safely and effectively as a complement to other safeguarding practices - with educators' and carers' supervision being chief among these. This question has taken on particular significance following several high-profile child safety incidents in ECEC settings, which have heightened public and government interest in the potential role of CCTV as one of many safeguarding tools.

With that in mind, Education Ministers agreed in October 2025 to conduct a national CCTV assessment (the Assessment) to build a strong evidence base and deliver advice on best practice use and operation of CCTV in services, including with respect to privacy, storage and other matters. The Assessment design was informed by a literature review, environmental scan, and engagement with experts, regulators and policymakers. The goal was to include up to 300 ECEC services reflecting the diversity of the sector.

Nous Group (Nous) successfully recruited 309 services (categorised as Tier 1) to complete detailed surveys, with 160 of these services (categorised as Tier 2) providing additional regular reporting and joined community of practice discussions. Eligible Tier 2 services received a participation payment to compensate for the time involved in completing fortnightly reports, responding to surveys and supporting site visits. Tier 1 services included in site visits also received purpose-specific payments.

The sample used for the Assessment was independently assessed to be a statistically valid representation of the broader sector in terms of risk profiles by location and size.[5] All jurisdictions were represented, and there was a good cross-section of service types, albeit that Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) were under-represented. One large multi-jurisdictional provider offered a number of services to participate in active reporting on the implementation and use of CCTV. Other large providers contributed to the Assessment but in ways beyond formal participation. For example, several informed the Assessment design and strengthened the evidence base by sharing insights from CCTV rollouts and pilot activities, including findings on staff and parent sentiment.

In addition, the Assessment interviewed larger ECEC providers, RAs, and suppliers of CCTV equipment and services. It conducted a nationwide survey of ECEC services prior to the Assessment, surveyed parents of children attending Tier 2 services, and engaged with sector representatives and technical experts to inform the findings outlined below.

The Assessment was also supported by an Expert Panel comprising sector representatives and experts in child protection, privacy, surveillance and law enforcement, including the Australian Centre for Child Protection (ACCP), Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) and Australian Federal Police (AFP), which provided advice on the Assessment's design, implementation and interpretation of findings.

comparable examples of implementation being preceded by a structured, evidence-based assessment at the scale and breadth of this Assessment.

[2] See section 1 of the Detailed Findings Report for a full explanation of the Assessment methodology and sample.

[3] CCTV equipment is considered to be of a suitable quality and installed appropriately where it can be operated safely and securely, with appropriate camera placement, sufficient image quality, reasonable retention periods, and the capability to provide footage to relevant authorities when required.

[4] According to Nous' whole of sector survey, which included responses from all National Law service types, CCTV use was at 30.3%, consistent with the Wheeler Review estimates for the sector in NSW (30%). A KPMG survey of the sector for the evaluation that accompanies this Assessment found that 23.5% of respondents used CCTV, excluding services who participated in the Assessment.

[5] Disaggregated analysis of participating services and the national ECEC sector provided by the Australian Government Department of Education using data from the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS). See Section 1 of the Detailed Findings Report for more detail.

EXPERT CONTRIBUTION



Panel members contributed expertise from government, regulation, research, child protection and the community sector.

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

The Assessment sought to understand current practice and explore different use cases for CCTV, with a view to weighing up the overall benefits, costs, limitations and risks. These are summarised here before presenting key findings and their potential implications for policy considerations. Importantly, the Assessment found that both the benefits and risks associated with CCTV vary depending on the context in which it is used, the type of harm being addressed, and how it is implemented and governed. More detail, structured to reflect the outcomes framework used in this Assessment, is provided in the attached Detailed Findings Report, which also sets out the methodology for the Assessment's design and implementation.

CCTV is a valuable tool to strengthen child safety, but guidance on its use is needed

On balance, the Assessment finds that the placement of CCTV cameras in ECEC services is a useful complement to other safeguarding practices. The circumstances in which it is set up and used, however, are crucially important. Conditions for its successful, safe and appropriate use are that it is:

- Adopted as an "additional set of eyes" and not to replace human supervision as required under the National Quality Framework
- Installed in a legally compliant way, and accompanied by appropriate policies and practices to protect privacy and ensure data security, and obtain consent from staff and parents (i.e. in cases where it is not a condition imposed by a RA)
- Used as evidence to better understand the source of reported or observed harm, and to identify risks to safety, rather than as a mechanism for 'micro-management' of staff
- Implemented in the context of a workplace culture that values trust and psychosocial safety for staff and children and families (taking account, for example, of heightened sensitivities to surveillance in some First Nations communities) and which also supports continual learning and practice improvement.

There is insufficient evidence to support a universal CCTV mandate at this time.

The Assessment was not in a position to examine the effects of mandatory introduction of CCTV, but we can reasonably conclude from the range of data provided that it would be neither necessary nor desirable for CCTV to be made mandatory across the entire sector. We note that two overseas jurisdictions, Singapore and the Republic of Korea, have introduced such a requirement, but without any evidence of its likely impacts (positive or negative). There may be a case for a targeted risk-based mandatory requirement, as will be trialled in New South Wales (NSW). This is because CCTV may be accessed or requested by RAs for the purposes of identifying any concerning patterns which might then inform a more thorough audit.

With respect to the sector as a whole, as noted above, CCTV is already becoming more normalised. There does not appear to be a need, therefore, to further incentivise or compel services to install CCTV (unless the RA does have clear concerns or wishes to make it a requirement for provider approval and/or ongoing operations). Moreover, a universal mandatory requirement would likely present a number of downsides and unintended consequences: RAs would need to confirm that CCTV is installed appropriately and is fully

functional; services would incur additional costs; the risks to unsafe management of data that could be used for exploitative purposes increase.

Such considerations point to the need for clear guidance for services who wish to install CCTV, or which may be compelled by an RA to do so at some point in the future. That guidance should make clear how to set up CCTV safely and appropriately, and to use it to greatest effect.

On this point, there are numerous laws that govern CCTV, stemming from the National Law, various Privacy Laws and a range of legislation relating to surveillance. This has produced some inconsistencies between different jurisdictional frameworks (e.g. ability to record audio, restrictions on placement of cameras) and ambiguity (e.g. concerning handling of footage of children who are the victims of sexual harm). There is also an important gap in requirements for the retention of CCTV footage by services. Some, if not all, of these issues could potentially be addressed through well-considered and nationally consistent sector guidance, developed through an intergovernmental mechanism.

The benefits of CCTV are most evident in its use to investigate incidents related to physical harm

The stand-out value of CCTV is its ability to provide, in most circumstances, a reliable view on what transpired before, during and after an incident affecting child safety. RAs greatly appreciate the option of consulting CCTV footage in their investigations, often noting that it expedited their resolution. While a majority argued that this did not translate to a less resource-intensive process overall (due to the time involved to access and review CCTV footage) one RA estimated a reduction in investigation time to be in the order of 20–30 per cent. It is possible that with the introduction of nationally consistent guidance – including on how to share data safely, ensure quality of footage, and minimum retention periods – the total administrative burden associated with RAs' use of CCTV could be reduced.

Services similarly value CCTV for clarifying the circumstances surrounding an incident. Staff consulted for the Assessment were strongly supportive of CCTV, primarily due to its potential to protect them from unfounded allegations. Eighty-two per cent of survey respondents agreed that CCTV helps protect staff from false allegations, and 84 per cent reported that they were comfortable with its presence in their workplace, compared with around 4 per cent who were uncomfortable.

While these conclusions were unsurprising, a notable finding was the extent to which a small number of services valued CCTV as a tool for reflective practice. Specifically, they described using footage to understand the patterns and causes of incidents, including to improve supervision arrangements and identify risks. Some also use it in a targeted way to support staff learning. This suggests CCTV may contribute not only to the detection of incidents after they occur, but also to continuous improvement efforts aimed at preventing future harm.

Related to this point, in a couple of instances, RAs found that reviewing CCTV footage was useful in capturing emerging child safety concerns, including patterns of behaviour that may not initially be recognised or reported by staff. The comment was made that CCTV can assist in establishing the circumstances of an event, identifying those involved, clarifying timeframes and identifying patterns that warrant further regulatory consideration.

Two of the use case scenarios explored in the Assessment are particularly relevant here, as they required services to engage in 'proactive' monitoring. This involved services purposefully monitoring live feeds or conducting a targeted retrospective review. In both cases the options were to randomly select time periods for monitoring or review, or to take a risk-based approach – for example, focusing on times of peak activity and risk. Data from Tier 2 participants showed that risk-based, retrospective review of footage was substantially more effective, identifying incidents at twice the rate of random footage reviews. More generally, proactive real-time monitoring of footage - either random or risk-based - appeared to provide only modest additional value in terms of detecting incidents, issues or risks (identifying these around 4 per cent of the time, versus proactive review, which surface incidents, issues or risks around 11 per cent of the time).

More generally, the Assessment found that, with some exceptions, the more services were asked to think about their use of CCTV (i.e. regardless of which scenario they were testing), the more open they became to using it in the interests of improving both quality and safety.

There are limitations on CCTV's effectiveness, however. First, there are restrictions - appropriately so - on camera placement. The fact that they are not allowed in private areas means that CCTV is not a particularly useful tool for preventing sexual harm of children by adults in ECEC settings. Nous' theory of change developed for the Assessment therefore focused on its value primarily with respect to physical abuse (intentional or incidental) and neglect.

The Assessment confirmed that CCTV was most often valuable for investigating physical harm and environmental incidents, with physical harm between children and physical environment issues comprising more than three quarters of all reported incidents. By comparison, incidents involving neglect or physical harm by staff were relatively rare, representing around one per cent of incidents each, although these incidents were more likely to be escalated to RAs. This aligns with RAs' observations that CCTV is often most valuable in investigating more serious matters that come to their attention, particularly incidents involving inappropriate discipline or supervision lapses during transition periods. While these incidents were comparatively rare, CCTV was often considered particularly helpful in providing objective evidence and enabling more confident decision-making.

AI-enabled technologies are emerging in the sector

Of note in this context is that one of the scenarios examined during the Assessment was the use of AI-enabled monitoring. Services using AI-supported systems reported benefits in perimeter monitoring, automated alerts and the ability to rapidly identify and retrieve relevant footage for review. Participating services generally reported that false-positive alerts were manageable after a period of repeated calibration, although experiences varied between systems. However, evidence regarding the effectiveness of AI-enabled monitoring remains sparse. AI capabilities are evolving rapidly and are typically implemented alongside broader investments in CCTV technology, making it difficult to isolate the benefits attributable to AI itself.

Further, while false-positive alerts can be observed and measured, there is minimal evidence regarding false negatives, which may represent the more significant risk from a child safety perspective. Emerging regulatory developments being progressed by The Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) may also place greater emphasis on demonstrating that AI-enabled monitoring is necessary, proportionate and effective, and that systems are appropriately governed, validated and supported by evidence of their intended safeguarding benefits. Application of the Online Children's Privacy Code, once finalised, across CCTV use in the ECEC sector is another area where the sector will most likely benefit from the development of nationally consistent guidance.

The costs of CCTV installation vary widely, and services are generally under-informed purchasers

The costs involved in installing CCTV ranged from less than $1,000 to $75,000. The variation does not simply reflect the size of the service - we saw a four-camera setup in a service with some 80 children, and a 61-camera setup for one with 120. System costs are primarily determined by the features and specifications of the equipment and systems, and the supporting data storage and video access infrastructure.

Some services use third parties to manage the installation, maintain the equipment and store the data, while others take more of a 'DIY' approach. As demand for CCTV in the sector has grown, so too has the number of CCTV installers. By one measure, almost a fifth of installers nationally were established in the last six years. Importantly, installers are not always located in the same areas as ECEC services. Supplier analysis found that regional and rural areas are at risk of thin market conditions, which may require ECEC services to pay a 10-20 per cent premium on CCTV installation.

Most services we engaged were eager to have access to more information to inform their procurement decisions. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that, where services were managing CCTV on their own, they regularly encountered issues with the system not working. Staff and managers often lacked confidence in

how to position cameras or access footage. This was often a problem for RAs seeking to access footage for an investigation. Further guidance is likely valuable to support more effective installation of CCTV, particularly for services in areas where limited access to installers necessitates self-installation.

A key ongoing risk is the variable level of sector understanding about safe use of CCTV

The major concern associated with the increasing uptake of CCTV in ECEC settings is the risk to privacy. Here, the Assessment found that services had inconsistent understanding of their responsibilities, even though all Assessment participants had CCTV installed – many for long periods of time – or were in the process of acquiring it. (Only those with installed systems and with appropriate policies in place were included in Tier 2 of the Assessment.)

The Assessment found that many services rely on template policies developed by third parties. Before being onboarded as Tier 2 participants in the Assessment, services were required to provide copies of their CCTV, privacy and data management policies. These were reviewed to confirm appropriate governance arrangements relating to camera placement, storage arrangements, access controls, retention periods and processes for managing requests to access footage. Analysis of these policies showed that, while the pro forma templates seemed to cover the right elements, some services had clearly done a 'copy-and-paste' without thoroughly checking and adapting the content. Analysis also found that policies across the sector do not always include critical governance arrangements, such as processes to check and respond to data breaches. This reinforces the desirability for clear guidance to the sector on best practice in CCTV governance, privacy and data management.

KEY FINDINGS

Key Finding 1

CCTV is a valuable tool, but there is no strong basis for a mandatory requirement to have it installed in all ECEC settings. CCTV is becoming increasingly common across the sector, driven by evolving family expectations, growing staff support for its role in providing objective evidence, and increasing interest from ECEC providers as part of a broader safeguarding strategy. Despite this, there is little support from any stakeholder group for a universal mandate. Most considered CCTV's value to depend on service context (including cultural or historical sensitivities about being surveilled) and risk profile. They also emphasised that it should complement rather than replace other safeguarding practices.

While CCTV can assist in identifying and reviewing risks, issues and incidents, there is limited evidence that its presence materially increases the detection of significant child safety incidents beyond existing safeguarding measures. Nevertheless, the Assessment acknowledges that mandatory installation can have merit in a narrow set of circumstances related to higher-risk services, both to support stronger safety cultures and provide an objective evidentiary basis for regulatory investigations and oversight. Indeed, RAs are already invoking their powers to require CCTV use with respect to some identified high-risk providers. The outcomes of NSW's upcoming trial will likely provide governments with further evidence on the effects of mandatory installation and use of CCTV.

Key Finding 2

CCTV can contribute to child safety, but its value is highly dependent on the type of harm concerned and whether the goal is prevention, detection or response. CCTV's strongest contribution is not as a universal prevention tool, but in strengthening investigations, supporting more defensible decisions, and helping services understand how risks arise. The nature and extent of this contribution varies across different types of harm:

- **Sexual abuse –** CCTV should not be considered a primary safeguard against sexual abuse in ECEC settings. Expert advice suggests determined perpetrators are unlikely to be reliably deterred by cameras alone, and camera placement restrictions limit CCTV's ability to observe many settings where abuse may occur. That said, CCTV may nevertheless assist in identifying or verifying behaviours that precede or sit

below the threshold of more serious abuse, including inappropriate conduct, professional-boundary concerns or grooming-related behaviours that may otherwise go unnoticed or unreported.

- **Physical abuse –** CCTV provides its clearest and most direct child safety benefit where physical harm or inappropriate physical conduct is recorded. In these matters, footage can improve investigative certainty, support more timely and defensible action, and help identify patterns of unsafe interactions that may otherwise rely on contested recollections or incomplete accounts. It can also support preventative action by helping services identify recurring patterns in when, where and how physical incidents occur, enabling targeted improvements to supervision arrangements and other safeguarding practices.
- **Neglect –** CCTV can also assist in identifying supervision gaps, environmental hazards and recurring practice issues that may contribute to neglect or lower-acuity risks. Its value is strongest where footage helps services understand how and why an incident occurred, such as whether children were adequately supervised, whether staff were positioned appropriately or whether environmental risks were managed effectively. Some services also reported that AI-enabled CCTV can assist in detection and response by flagging potential risks, including perimeter breaches or unexpected behaviour during sleep periods, for staff assessment. These capabilities remain dependent on human review and should be viewed as a complement to existing safeguarding practices rather than a substitute for them.

Key Finding 3

CCTV delivers value through two distinct but complementary use cases: *event-driven review*, which supports incident detection and response, and *proactive review*, which supports prevention, organisational learning and continuous improvement.

- **Event-driven review** – CCTV contributes more to understanding incidents than to detecting them. Most incidents continue to be identified by educators and carers, families and children, with CCTV primarily used to verify facts, provide context and strengthen investigations.
- **Proactive review** – this appears to offer CCTV's strongest link to prevention. By purposefully reviewing footage, services can identify supervision issues, emerging risks and opportunities for practice improvement that may not be apparent through individual incidents alone. This broader view can help services understand patterns of risk, strengthen safeguards and address underlying issues before they contribute to more serious concerns. However, these benefits must be balanced against the time involved, which may rule it out as an option for services experiencing workforce or workload pressures. Risk-based monitoring approaches could help address the challenges associated with proactive review, with Assessment findings suggesting that targeted review of shorter footage segments may deliver similar benefits to reviewing longer periods of footage.



Key Finding 4

AI-enabled CCTV may improve the efficiency of footage review by services, but it heightens risks in some areas and its child safety benefits are, at this stage of development, limited to less acute types of harm. Based on the small number of services included in the Assessment currently using AI functionality in their CCTV systems, available products are most useful in identifying relevant footage, tracking movement across camera views and issuing alerts about perimeter breaches or potential unauthorised access. The broader value of AI-enabled CCTV is constrained by services who report its inability to effectively interpret interactions between children and educators, and by the number of 'false positive' alerts requiring system recalibrations. The use of AI-enabled CCTV can amplify risks related to privacy and cybersecurity, and there is a mixed level of knowledge in the sector about how to use the technology lawfully, effectively and safely. As AI-enabled surveillance technologies continue to evolve, they may also introduce new child safety risks and unintended consequences, most notably with respect to an over-reliance on automated detection.

Key Finding 5

RAs generally regard CCTV footage, where available and of suitable quality, to be a valuable additional source of evidence. Benefits are greatest in matters where relevant conduct is clearly captured on footage and where there is ambiguity or contested views on what has transpired. In such situations, CCTV can provide an objective record that strengthens findings and supports more timely investigations and regulatory action. Several RAs reported that CCTV evidence can materially influence regulatory outcomes, enabling them to proceed with prohibitions more quickly and with greater confidence, and reducing the likelihood of successful appeals through the provision of strong, less contestable evidence. However, there are often challenges in: obtaining the footage before it is deleted, physically accessing the data and/or working with low-quality images. Some RAs also suggested that they would prefer to be able to access audio, but this is not usually possible (due in part to the different prevailing legislative requirements and sector understanding of what is allowable).

Key Finding 6

Many ECEC services lack the technical capability required to ensure CCTV systems are fit for purpose. CCTV only supports child safety where systems have appropriate coverage, reliable image quality, sufficient retention periods, timely access to footage and secure storage arrangements. Poor camera placement, short

retention periods and unreliable access can substantially reduce the value of CCTV. Many participants acknowledged limited understanding of how CCTV systems should be designed, configured and operated to maximise their effectiveness.

Key Finding 7

Services would benefit from guidance on good practice in the safe and effective use of CCTV. The governance maturity required to support safe and compliant CCTV use varies considerably across the sector, and marked variations were observed in providers' privacy, cybersecurity and data management practices. While some participants demonstrated a sound based of knowledge, which was enhanced through the process of being onboarded into the Assessment, generally there was a desire for guidance on how to meet privacy and related obligations. While advice and template policies are available from third parties, there was an appetite also for guidance to support more informed purchase and installation of CCTV systems, good practice related to data retention and sharing, and the ways in which CCTV can potentially be used as a complement to other child safeguarding measures.

Key Finding 8

CCTV appears more likely to support, rather than undermine, a strong safety culture when implemented with effective leadership. The benefits and risks associated with CCTV are heavily influenced by how it is introduced, governed and used within a service. The Assessment found limited evidence that CCTV adversely affected workforce culture when implemented with clear purpose, governance and communication. Many participants described CCTV as supporting greater accountability, more confident decision-making and stronger organisational learning. Services were more likely to realise value from CCTV where leaders clearly articulated its purpose, fostered trust and transparency with staff and families, and positioned CCTV as one component of a broader safeguarding system. Effective leadership therefore plays an important role in ensuring CCTV reinforces a culture of safeguarding while maintaining the psychological safety of staff.

Key Finding 9

There are inconsistencies and areas of ambiguity across legislative and regulatory settings governing CCTV use in ECEC. The National Law and National Regulations, the main instruments regulating the ECEC sector, are largely silent on CCTV, except with respect to the requirement in the s168 of the Regulations that services have relevant policies and procedures in place. Binding rules on CCTV installation and use are mostly found in the criminal codes, surveillance, workplace and privacy legislation of States and Territories. While broadly similar in intent and coverage, the Assessment found several areas that would benefit from further clarity and improved consistency in how the laws are interpreted and applied – for example in relation to audio recording, parental access to footage and data retention periods. This would make it easier for multi-jurisdictional providers to operate with consistent policies, procedures and governance arrangements, and would improve certainty on such issues as footage sharing, retention obligations and the use of AI technologies that rely on biometric data.

Key Finding 10

The CCTV market is becoming increasingly diverse, creating both opportunities and challenges for ECEC services. Options range from simple camera installations to sophisticated systems incorporating cloud storage, advanced analytics and AI-enabled monitoring capabilities. This diversity provides great flexibility for services to select solutions suited to their context and safeguarding objectives. However, it also places greater demands on them to assess system suitability, effectiveness, and regulatory compliance, and to weigh up alternatives – a challenge compounded by the growing market and emergent technologies. It also makes services vulnerable to a reliance on third parties, including installers and suppliers of template policies, for advice on meeting regulatory requirements. Further, not all services are equally well-served, with those in regional, rural and remote areas being more likely to face higher costs. In the context of a dynamic market, many admitted they were not well-informed purchasers of CCTV technology and said they would value clearer guidance on product specifications, installation, vendor due diligence and data management.

Evidence base

Research base

- Literature Review
- Environmental Scan
- Theory of Change

Drawing on external input from:

EXPERTS	SECTOR	WORKFORCE
• Child safety academics • Privacy experts • Surveillance specialists • Regulatory authorities	• Provider organisations • ECEC peak bodies • Parents and caregivers • Vendors and installers of CCTV systems	• Educators and staff • Unions • Other industry representatives

REGULATORY AGENCY ENGAGEMENTS
16

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE SESSIONS
13
ACROSS SIX THEMES

16 Site visits

- 10 IN PERSON SITE VISITS
- 4 VIRTUAL SITE VISITS
- 2 TIER 1 SERVICE SITE VISITS

SURVEY RESPONSES

861	1,242	267	10	365
Providers (sector-wide)	Educators and other staff	Service/centre managers	Head office representatives	Parents and caregivers



309
Participating Services

Across all Jurisdictions

160
Tier 2 Services
ACTIVELY REPORTING SERVICE USAGE DATA

Over 8
FORTNIGHTLY REPORTING PERIODS

149
Tier 1 Services
RESPONDING TO DETAILED REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION AND PARTICIPATING IN SOME SITE VISITS

REPORTING SUMMARY

3,300+ REPORTED INCIDENTS:
Harm or potential harm, including identified issues or risks

~2,000 FOOTAGE REVIEWS

1,500+ REVIEW HOURS

Key findings

There are two compelling use cases of CCTV

1. Event driven review
2. Proactive review

CCTV IS MORE OFTEN USED TO INVESTIGATE RATHER THAN DETECT

3 in 4
Incidents first identified by staff

6 in 10
Captured on camera (fully or partially)

CCTV can be invaluable in resolving a complaint, as it provides an objective **'source of truth'**

Reported incidents are often low-level and involve minor physical injuries

When incidents are captured on CCTV:

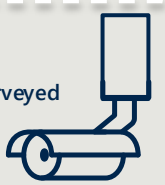
- They overwhelmingly relate to **physical harm or neglect**
- They **rarely relate to sexual abuse**

BENEFITS OF PROACTIVE REVIEW OF FOOTAGE

2x More noteworthy incidents found when proactive footage reviews are risk -based

Nearly 1 in 10 Proactive footage reviews found a noteworthy incident

23-30%
Of services surveyed reported CCTV use



> CCTV supports child safety, but educator supervision remains the first line of protection
>
> - ECEC Service

STAFF AND PARENT VIEWS

86% Of staff reported CCTV makes it clearer what happened in an incident

87% Of parents said knowing CCTV was in place made them more comfortable to raise a concern or complaint

76% Of managers reported greater confidence that the correct response was taken

82% Of staff feel more protected from false allegations

Retention periods and costs to install CCTV

No recording — 3 years
How long services store their footage

< $1,000 — $75,000
Reported cost to install CCTV