

CPA Australia professional standards regime

Report to the Parliamentary
Joint Committee on
Corporations and Financial
Services

Disclosure

This document is provided to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services pursuant to subsection 243 of the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001* through its ongoing inquiry into Oversight of ASIC, the Takeovers Panel and the Corporations Legislation.

CPA Australia operates professional standards as a self-regulatory regime and is required to report annually on the operation of those standards to the Committee and appear before the Committee to provide oversight on the operation of the relevant standard. This follows recommendation 10 of the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee's report titled *Management and Assurance of Integrity by Consulting Services*.

This document does not include any confidential or other commercially sensitive information that would prevent the publication of the document on the Committee's website.

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1. Introduction

In response to the request of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services (the Committee) regarding the Committee's oversight of professional standards regimes, CPA Australia provides this report of the professional standards regime administered by CPA Australia.

As per the Committee's request we provide:

- a. Our 2024 Annual Professional Standards Report (APSR) submitted to the Professional Standards Council (PSC). This report was approved by the CPA Australia Board and submitted to the PSC on 27 March 2025. This report outlines our activities for the period 1 January to 31 December 2024.

The basis of reporting to the PSC is to report changes and updates to our established policies and processes related to the administration of our professional standards scheme. The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) provides a template alongside their guidance document to facilitate consistent year on year reporting by all associations with approved schemes. CPA Australia prepares its annual report in line with the template and supporting guidance.

We are providing the committee the full 2024 APSR report and attachments, however have separated Attachments 1 and 2 on a redacted basis to remain confidential to the Committee and not be made publicly available. We request this on the basis that the information contained in these attachments is commercial in confidence and should not be shared on the basis they will disadvantage CPA Australia competitively.

As advised to the Committee Secretary in our December correspondence we are unable to provide our 2025 APSR at this time. This report is not due to the Professional Standards Council until 31 March 2025.

- b. A breakdown of CPA Australia's membership including:
 - i. Membership categories; the number of members in each category; and the relevant fees for each category
 - ii. The number and level/classification of members employed by each of the following six firms: PWC; KPMG; EY; Deloitte; BDO; and Grant Thornton.
- c. The number of complaints, investigations and sanctions issues in relation to each of the six firms listed above.

2. Our professional standards

CPA Australia's professional standards team consists of three different teams delivering the CPA Australia Best Practice Program, the annual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) review and Regulatory Compliance activities for CPA Australia. These activities are central to the operation of our professional standard scheme. The Professional Standards team through these activities also plays a key role in supporting members in public practice and delivering on additional content, tools and resources to continually add value to our public practice members. We provide the below overview of our professional standards activities as information for the committee.

CPA Australia Best Practice Program (Program)

The Program is the mechanism we use to both support and monitor our members in public practice. The Program assesses members providing public accounting services to ensure their ongoing compliance with their professional and ethical requirements. A sample of members is selected each year to participate in an assessment. Selection frequency is dependent on the nature of the services being provided by a particular member and other risk factors. Assessments include consideration of the member's firm level policies and procedures for systems of quality management, risk management, engaging with their clients, as well as the application of these at the engagement level in accordance with the relevant Accounting Professional Ethical Standards (APES) requirements and where appropriate accounting and auditing standards. The assessment also confirms members compliance with the obligations as a CPA Australia Public Practice Certificate (PPC) holder, including appropriate levels of professional indemnity insurance (PII), CPD, and practice branding.

CPD Review

Each year we select a sample of members to be included in a CPD Review. When selected, members are requested to provide evidence of the CPD they have undertaken in line with CPD obligations as outlined within the CPA Australia By-Laws and this evidence is assessed for compliance.

CPA Australia communicates its CPD requirements of members within its By-Laws, part 4. These included:

- Requirement for members in each triennium to undertake at least 120 hours of CPD, of which at least 20 hours must be undertaken in each year of the triennium.
- Within the 120 hours of CPD in each triennium, members must undertake at least 10 hours of ethics and professional responsibility, of which at least 2 hours must be undertaken in each year of the triennium.

Within the categories of CPD activity some caps apply, for example, members can claim a maximum of 10 hours for reading, listening to podcasts or watching videos.

Regulatory Compliance

The Regulatory Compliance team manages our professional standards scheme compliance activities and reporting, and all other regulatory related activities and reporting for CPA Australia's public practice membership. This reporting includes the New Zealand Financial Markets Authority (FMA), Tax Practitioner Board (TPB), Financial Reporting Council (FRC), and the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC). Related to these activities this team also manages our public accounting services risk management, professional indemnity insurance member monitoring and insurer partnership agreement, public practice member support, tools and resources, public practice program content, and the Public Practice Advisory Committee.

Governance

CPA Australia's governance arrangements and requirements for management that sit over our professional standards regime are available on our website and are also reported in our [2024 Integrated Report 2024 | CPA Australia](#).

- Constitution - [Our Constitution | CPA Australia](#)
- By-Laws - [Our By-Laws | CPA Australia](#)
- Mission or goals - [Our strategy 2022-2027 | CPA Australia](#)
- Code of ethics - [APES 110 code of ethics for professional accountants | CPA Australia](#)
- Membership requirements – as per part 3 of our By-Laws
- Member classes - [About the CPA Program | CPA Australia](#) & [Completing the CPA Program | CPA Australia](#)
- Board and Committee structures - [CPA Board of Directors | CPA Australia](#)

3. CPA Australia membership

A. Membership categories and fees

We have three categories of membership:

- ASA – Associate
- CPA/FCPA – Fully qualified member
- Retired – greater than 55 years old and no longer engaged in full-time gainful employment

Within the fully qualified and retired categories we have the additional class of member, those holding our Public Practice Certificate (PPC).

Table 1: CPA Australia membership categories and fees for 2026

Membership category	Price (AUD)
Associate	\$399.50
CPA or FCPA	\$888
Retired	\$177
Reduced (on application only)	\$444
Late fees: applies to payments received from 4 February onwards (not applicable to retired or reduced membership)	\$90
Public Practice Certificate	\$568
Limited Practice Certificate	\$135

Source: [Member Service Fees Australia | CPA Australia](#)

B. Number of members in each category of membership

CPA Australia has more than 176,000 members working in over 100 jurisdictions and regions around the world. The table below reports the number of members in each category of membership inside and outside of Australia.

Table 2: Number of members by membership category

	ASA	FQ	Retired	Total
Australia	18,390	86,809	13,836	119,035
Outside Australia	13,967	40,620	2,705	57,292
Total	32,357	127,429	16,541	176,327

Source: CPA Australia Customer Engagement as at 31 December 2025

Public Practice Certificate Holders:

Within our membership we have a class of member who holds our PPC as well as being a CPA. As of 31 December 2025, we had 7,389, of which 7,233 are Australian members. Our professional standards scheme only applies to our Australian public practice members.

C. Membership by firm

The table below shows how many members of CPA Australia have included in their membership profile that are currently employed (as of 31 December 2025) at one of the six firms specified by the committee and their level. We have also included the number that hold our PPC.

Table 3: Number of members by firm and level

Location	Job title	PwC	KPMG	EY	Deloitte	BDO	Grant Thornton
Australia	Partner or Director	29	47	24	53	20	9
	CEO, CFO, or Managing Director	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Other	277	315	255	280	144	65
	Total	306	362	279	333	165	75
	PPC holders included in above	0	0	0	4	5	4
Outside Australia	Partner or Director	108	101	143	155	30	33
	CEO, CFO, or Managing Director	2	0	2	4	0	1
	Other	1439	955	1055	892	396	275
	Total	1549	1056	1200	1051	426	309
	PPC holders included in above	3	1	1	2	1	6
Total members	Total	1855	1418	1479	1384	591	384
	PPC holders	3	1	1	6	6	10

Source: CPA Australia Customer Engagement database 31 December 2025.

Note: Members are required to update and confirm their current employer and job title as part of their annual membership renewal, however, CPA Australia does not validate these details. Members may amend their details at any time. The table reflects the details advised to CPA Australia as at 31 December 2025.

4. Complaints, investigations and sanctions by firm

CPA Australia's By-Law 5 outlines the process to be followed for the initiation, investigation, and Determination of a Complaint against a Member. CPA Australia only investigates Complaints against individual members, not firms. Where a Complaint is received against a CPA branded firm, and an individual Member cannot be identified, all the directors (Members) of the firm are investigated/held accountable.

For the year 1 January to 31 December 2024, two (2) complaints were received against individual members of CPA Australia, whose records indicate they were employed by one of the six (6) firms specified by the committee. An overview of these complaints and the outcome of each matter is documented in the table below:

Table 4: Number of complaints by firm 2024

Firm name	No. of complaints received	Alleged breach of the CPA Australia Constitution	Outcome
Ernst & Young Hong Kong	1	Academic Misconduct	Member forfeited from membership for a period of two years. A fail recorded against the exam.
Ernst & Young Hong Kong	1	Conduct dishonourable (Member self-disclosed arrest for violation of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance)	Closed - no case to answer . Charges were dropped, no further action taken.

Source: CPA Australia Customer Engagement complaints database

For the year 1 January to 31 December 2025, three (3) complaints were received against individual members of CPA Australia, whose records indicate they were employed by one of the six (6) firms specified by the committee. An overview of these complaints and the outcome of each matter is documented in the table below:

Table 5: Number of complaints by firm 2025

Firm name	No. of complaints received	Alleged breach of the CPA Australia Constitution	Outcome
BDO Hong Kong	1	Adverse finding by AFRC	Member reprimanded
Grant Thornton New Zealand	1	Professional Care	Closed - no case to answer No evidence to support allegations
KPMG Hong Kong	1	Unprofessional conduct in the workplace	Complaint withdrawn

Source: CPA Australia Customer Engagement complaints database