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## Australia Victoria pushes for national child safety reform

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*August 21, 2025*

– *Categories: Uncategorized*

Victoria has called on other states and the federal government to join its child safety overhaul and support a coordinated national response.

Premier Jacinta Allan said a recent independent review exposed systemic failings, underfunding, and outdated practices, prompting her government to commit \$42 million to implement all 22 recommendations by year's end. The reforms will strengthen protections across childcare and early education services.

"This must go beyond state borders," Allan said, noting that ministers meeting with federal officials this week have an opportunity to make child safety a national priority.

The review was commissioned after childcare worker Joshua Dale Brown was charged with more than 70 offences, including child sexual abuse. Allan said urgent reforms are needed to ensure consistent, high safety standards nationally.

### Flood crisis in NSW and Queensland

Meanwhile, torrential rain continues to batter New South Wales and south-east Queensland, with authorities warning of dangerous conditions.

Two men remain missing after a car plunged into the Macdonald River in north-west Sydney overnight. Emergency services have urged motorists not to drive through floodwaters as rivers swell across the region.

The Bureau of Meteorology has forecast 40 to 80 millimetres of rain in the next 24 hours from the Gold Coast down to the Illawarra. Several rivers, including the Namoi, Peel, Nepean and Barwon, are on flood watch.

Meteorologist Helen Reid said the heaviest falls will ease into the weekend, but flooding impacts are likely to continue into next week.

### **Raiders prepare for Panthers clash**

In sport, Canberra Raiders utility Simi Sasagi says tomorrow's clash with Penrith Panthers will be a vital test ahead of the NRL finals.

The Raiders are looking to build momentum as the regular season draws to a close. Sasagi said the team was focused on sharpening its attack and discipline against one of the league's strongest sides.

"It's the kind of challenge we need before finals," Sasagi said.

### **Global update: Gaza tensions escalate**

Outside Australia, Israel has launched a new phase of military operations in Gaza City, while reservists are being called up for expanded combat. Families of hostages have staged demonstrations, urging the government to reach a deal for their release.