

Questions under rule 6.3

1. Revised Statement of Faith

Dean Sandy Grant asked the following question –

- (a) Since the revised Statement of Faith was adopted in late 2019, how many candidates have been willing to sign that form of the Statement of Faith and have been successfully elected or appointed to the following positions:
 - (i) Head (or Acting Head) of an Anglican School,
 - (ii) Member of an Anglican School Council, or
 - (iii) CEO or Member of a board of another Synod controlled Anglican organisation?
- (b) Can our diocesan schools advise, in a way that does not identify individual Anglican schools, how many diocesan Anglican Schools, where the revised Statement of Faith is applied to prospective Heads and/or Council members, have had enrolment levels and waiting lists fall, and how many have had enrolment levels and waiting lists rise in 2023-24, compared to 2018-2019 before the Statement of Faith was changed?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question refers to 'Anglican schools', 'diocesan schools', and 'diocesan Anglican schools' interchangeably. In interpreting this question, any reference to either a Diocesan School or an Anglican School is taken to refer to both Diocesan Schools and Anglican Schools.

The only way to obtain the information needed to answer the question would be to conduct a survey of all Diocesan and Anglican Schools, which would be impractical to do in the short timeframe available for questions.

(a)

- (i) Regarding Heads (or Acting Heads) of an Anglican School:

It is not possible to state how many Heads or Acting Heads of Anglican Schools or Diocesan Schools have signed the revised Statement of Personal Faith as there is no centralised reporting or collection of signed Statements of Personal Faith for Heads or Acting Heads of Anglican or Diocesan Schools.

Since 2020, four ordinances governing Diocesan Schools have been amended to incorporate or adopt the revised Statement of Faith. In each of these ordinances a person is not eligible to be appointed Head unless they have signed the Statement of Personal Faith. None of these ordinances specifically refers to an "Acting Head" role. It is also the case that individual Diocesan School governing bodies may have adopted a requirement to sign the revised Statement of Faith as a policy of the organisation, rather than by an amendment to their ordinance. It is not possible to state how many Heads or Acting Heads have adopted this requirement as a matter of policy, as this is for the individual organisation to oversee.

- (ii) Regarding Members of an Anglican School Council:

257 persons have been elected by the Synod or the Standing Committee to the governing bodies of schools in circumstances where the nominator has certified that the nominee is willing to sign the revised Statement of Personal Faith. 188 persons have been elected by the Synod, and 69 persons have been elected by the Standing Committee, with these certifications.

Members of school councils who are not elected by the Synod or Standing Committee may nonetheless be required to sign the revised Statement of Faith by the electing or appointing body. The revised Statement of Faith applies to up

to 32 members of school governing bodies who are not elected by the Synod or by the Standing Committee by operation of their ordinance or constitution, and may apply to more under the policies of individual organisations. It is not possible to state how many members of these school councils have signed the revised Statement of Faith as that is a matter for the individual organisation to monitor in accordance with their own ordinance, constitution or policies.

- (iii) Regarding CEOs or Members of a board of another Synod controlled Anglican organisation:

144 persons have been elected to the governing bodies of other diocesan bodies corporate in circumstances where the nominator has certified that the nominee is willing to sign the Statement of Personal Faith “as amended from time to time”, and will do so before attending their first meeting. 83 persons have been elected by the Synod, and 61 persons have been elected by the Standing Committee, with these certifications.

There is no centralised reporting or collection of signed Statements for CEOs or members of boards of Synod-controlled organisations who are not elected by the Synod or Standing Committee. One Committee has a requirement in its terms of reference, and ten diocesan organisations have amended their ordinances to adopt this requirement. These 11 organisations, in aggregate, include 39 members not elected by the Synod or by the Standing Committee. Five of these organisations have a CEO or equivalent who is also required to sign the Statement of Personal Faith. There could be other organisations with a requirement about which we are unaware.

- (b) There is no source of information against which to answer the question. The only way to obtain the information needed to answer the question would be to conduct a survey of all Diocesan and Anglican Schools, which would be impractical to do in the short timeframe available for questions. Further, this information is likely to be commercially sensitive, and the collection and publication of such information in a public forum such as the Synod, even where the information is de-identified, may nonetheless reduce the commercial value of the information as a result of such disclosure.

2. Distribution of ‘The Lord’s Supper in Human Hands’

The Rev David Morgan asked the following question –

Concerning the publication, “The Lord’s Supper in Human Hands: Who Should Administer?”:

- (a) Did the Diocesan Secretariat send copies of “The Lord’s Supper in Human Hands: Who Should Administer?” to all Bishops who attended the inaugural GAFCON conference in 2008?
- (b) Did any of the Bishops who attended that inaugural GAFCON conference make a response to the Diocese concerning the argument of “The Lord’s Supper in Human Hands”?
- (c) If any GAFCON Bishops did respond, can the Synod be made aware of what those responses were?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Yes. The Diocesan Secretary arranged for the publisher of “The Lord’s Supper in Human Hands”, the Australian Church Record (**ACR**), to send a copy to bishops who attended GAFCON.
- (b) In addition to the bishops who attended GAFCON, the ACR also sent copies of the document to all Australian bishops, and 850 world bishops. Of those who received a copy, three bishops responded to the ACR. However, it is not known whether these bishops attended GAFCON, or whether they were part of the wider circulation.

- (c) It is not known whether the three bishops who responded attended GAFCON. The responses which were received by the Australian Church Record were warm and appreciative.

3. Expenditure of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry

The Rev John Chappell asked the following question –

- (a) Noting the *Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024*, with Standing Committee's incorporation of the expected 22% rise in the 2025 Office of the Director of Safe Ministry's (**ODSM**) operational budget (\$277,000 increase - Book 1, p. 233):
- (i) Can the President please update the house as to what ordinances and policies govern ODSM expenditure?
 - (ii) Can the house be supplied with the text of motion and date of meeting when the Safe Ministry Board (**SMB**) authorised this request to Standing Committee for expenditure increase?
- (b) Noting the \$75,832 ODSM 2023 expenditure on Entertainment and Travel (Book 1, p. 36):
- (i) Can the house be updated on the rationale of the over 600% expansion on 2022 entertainment and travel expenditure?
 - (ii) Can the entertainment costs be itemized with explanatory comments?
 - (iii) Can the travel costs be itemized with explanatory comments?
 - (iv) Can the house please be supplied with the text of the motion and date of meeting when the SMB authorised this entertainment and travel expenditure?
- (c) Noting that the report from Synod resolution 9/23 (Book 1, p.25) requested for Synod this year has not yet been completed, can the house please be informed of progress since the July Standing Committee report to Synod?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a)
- (i) The *Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001* sets out the functions of the Safe Ministry Board, including the oversight of the budget and finances of the ODSM. The Finance Committee – Synod Funds Expenditure Approval and Authorisation Matrix sets out delegations for Care & Assistance payments and operational expenditure of the ODSM.
 - (ii) The request for additional funds was approved by the Board at its meeting on 2 May 2024 and took into consideration expected CPI and other cost increases advised by SDS, the significant operating deficit the ODSM experienced in 2023 and is budgeted to experience in 2024, and the need to have sufficient cash reserves to operate without reducing resources available to support parishes.

The text of the motion is as follows:

'Diocesan Resources Committee – ODSM funding requirements

The Board **noted** an oral report from the Chair.

The Board **agreed**, in light of its substantial deficit in 2023 and assuming a projected CPI rate of 5%, to request the Diocesan Resources Committee to allocate an increase in funding for the ODSM in 2025 from Parish Cost Recoveries of \$300K.'

- (b)
- (i) The Entertainment and Travel category includes costs incurred in running the Faithfulness in Ministry conference in 2023, which accounted for \$64,045 of the total costs in this category of \$75,832.
 - (ii) See answer to (i).

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- (iii) The remaining amount of \$11,787 is an increase on prior years mainly due to increased parish engagements and visits post Covid.
- (iv) The SMB exercises governance of ODSM expenditure through its review of financial reports at each board meeting. The Board does not approve each item of expenditure.
- (c) The Committee appointed to address the request of resolution 9/23 conducted a survey of people with first-hand experience of the complaints process. The Committee has received the deidentified responses to the survey, and these will be discussed at the Committee's next meeting on 17 October. Since July, the Committee has also spent time analysing the complaints processes of other denominations.

4. Diocesan statistics

The Rev Zac Veron asked the following question –

- (a) How many people in total attended a Sydney Anglican church on any week, as an average expressed over a calendar year of attendance, and excluding periods of lockdowns of society, in 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006 and 2005?
- (b) If any figure for any one of these years is unknown, why is that so?
- (c) Was there any change of counting methodology implemented since 2005 - 2022 attendance figures were revealed to the Synod in 2023? If so, what was that change?
- (d) Why are these attendance figures collected, and what is done with them?
- (e) When was the last year attendance figures for each parish were published in the Diocesan Year Book?
- (f) When was the last year net financial receipts for each parish were published in the Diocesan Year Book?
- (g) Are there any plans to recommence publishing attendance figures and net financial receipts for each parish in the Diocesan Year Book? If not, why not?
- (h) Is it true that the Parish Administration Ordinance requires the Minister to maintain registers of baptisms, weddings and funerals?
- (i) How many infant baptisms were conducted through the ministry of Sydney Anglican churches in 1983, 1993, 2003, 2013 & 2023?
- (j) How many mature baptisms were conducted through the ministry of Sydney Anglican churches in 1983, 1993, 2003, 2013 & 2023?
- (k) How many funerals were conducted by Sydney Anglican ministers in 1983, 1993, 2003, 2013 & 2023?
- (l) How many weddings were conducted by Sydney Anglican clergy in 1983, 1993, 2003, 2013 & 2023?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

(a)

Year	Average Attendance per Week
2005	46,884
2006	47,388
2007	47,097
2008	45,695
2009	47,120

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Year	Average Attendance per Week
2010	47,256
2011	46,983
2012	47,221
2013	46,896
2014	47,868
2015	48,554
2016	47,138
2017	47,063
2018	46,608
2019	45,408
2020*	45,691
2021	38,949
2022*	39,987
2023	44,687

Notes to the Table:

Since the 2023 Synod, the figures have increased for 2020 and 2022. In December 2023 it was discovered that two parishes had not been included in the 2020 figure, which was corrected at that time. After the data were extracted to answer Synod questions in 2023, four parishes subsequently submitted their statistics for 2022 and estimates were generated for four other parishes.

- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
- (d) Attendance figures are used for insurance purposes, to assist in monitoring church health, diocesan planning and research. For these purposes the figures are made available to the Manager Insurance Services, Archbishop's Senior Staff, and from time to time others entrusted with research in the Diocese.
- (e) 2003.
- (f) 2008.
- (g) No. The purpose of providing annual statistics in the Year Book is to see the attendance in the Diocese and the regions, not each individual parish. The net financial receipts were published in the Year Book as part of the Synod Proceedings. The Synod Proceedings other than the Presidential address are no longer printed in the Year Book.
- (h) Yes, at rule 3.21 of Schedule 1 and rule 3.20 of Schedule 2.
- (i) The answers to parts (i) to (l) are provided in tabular form below.

Year	Infant baptisms	Mature baptisms	Funerals	Weddings
1983	Data for 1983 not fully available, and not published in the Year Book.			
1993	4614	357	4107	3146
2003	3012	476	2308	1877
2013	Not collected.			
2023	Not collected.			

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Note to the table:

The statistics for 1993 are stored in a format different to the way they are stored today. As such, while we are able to provide figures for 1993, the figures have not been reviewed.

5. Synod income and Assistant Bishop costs

Professor Chris Bellenger asked the following question –

- (a) Using 2023 as a base what would be the dollar value of 0.5% of the ‘total available income for Synod’ as referred to in the report 10/23 (Book 1, p.113), Recommendation 3(b)?
- (b) Using 2023 as a base what is the approximate average annual total dollar cost to the Endowment of the See (**EOS**), the Diocesan Endowment and any other church funds for maintenance of an Assistant Bishop, including salary and allowances, superannuation, housing, travel, provision of office and secretarial assistance and any other major expense?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) \$35,050.
- (b) All costs associated with the work of Regional Bishops are borne by the Endowment of the See Corporation. The Standing Committee determines the stipend of Regional Bishops, which is currently set at 160% of the minimum stipend for rectors per the Remuneration Guidelines. The Bishop for International Relations serves in an honorary capacity and is not paid a stipend by EOS.

It is not possible to reliably estimate each Regional Bishop’s share of other costs associated with the work of the EOS. Most other costs incurred by the EOS in the support of the work of Regional Bishops are the subject of a Service Level Agreement between EOS and Sydney Diocesan Services. These costs are attributed to EOS as a whole, and are not allocated on an individual staff member basis.

6. Delegations and directions under certain canons of General Synod

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

- (a) Which diocesan officials, if any, have been delegated the power or discretion of the Archbishop under the Holy Communion Canon 2001 (adopted by the *General Synod – Holy Communion Canon 2001 Adopting Ordinance 2004*), and to what extent, if any, in accordance with the Canon Concerning Authority on Certain Matters 1989 (adopted by the *General Synod - Canon Concerning Authority on Certain Matters 1989 Adopting Ordinance 1993*)?
- (b) In each year from 2012 to 2023, how many people, if any, were directed not to receive communion by the Archbishop (or Administrator, or Commissary, or delegated official (if any)) under clause 6 of the Holy Communion Canon 2001 (adopted by the *General Synod – Holy Communion Canon 2001 Adopting Ordinance 2004*)? And how many of these people, if any, were subsequently restored to communion by the Archbishop (or Administrator, or Commissary, or delegated official (if any))?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) None.
- (b) To the best of our knowledge, none.

7. Tuition fees for Sydney Church of England Grammar School

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Why have tuition fees for Sydney Church of England Grammar School risen by a greater percentage than the consumer price index?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

It is commonplace in schools for the costs in delivering education to rise more quickly than inflation.

The key driver of the cost of schooling is salaries and teacher salaries increased well above inflation in 2024. In addition, increased expectations on schools, particularly in terms of individualised assistance to many students, have led to the appointment of additional staff, which is then reflected in the fees.

Other important costs for schools, including Shore, have risen at higher rates than CPI including insurance, energy and construction costs.

8. Remunerated key management personnel at Anglican Schools Corporation

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Why did the number of remunerated key management personnel for the 'Anglican Schools Corporation_ACNC GROUP' drop from 23 in 2022 to not more than one in 2023?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

There was an input error on the ACNC register. This has now been corrected to show 26 key management personnel.

9. Theological qualifications of authorised lay ministers and lay chaplains

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

- (a) How many full time and substantially full time authorised lay ministers and lay chaplains currently have the theological qualifications for ordination?
- (b) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any,
 - (i) Are under 23 years of age?
 - (ii) Are divorced, or married to someone who has been divorced?
 - (iii) Disagree with the Thirty-Nine Articles?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Before answering the question, I make the comment that lay ministry is local ministry and thus, whilst the Diocesan Registry issues the authorisations for Lay Ministers, their qualifications and beliefs are addressed at a local level and not assessed by the Registry. Because of this, the Registry does not request details of the theological qualifications or beliefs of those authorised for lay ministry other than subscription to a statement of faith. The answers below have been prepared on the basis of information which has been voluntarily provided on an incidental basis.

- (a) It is not possible to account for “substantially full time” ministers as the Registry does not record full-time equivalence (**FTE**).

There are 48 full-time lay ministers and lay chaplains who have the theological qualifications for ordination.

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These figures are based on information voluntarily provided. As such, the number may be higher.

- (b)
- (i) None.
 - (ii) This information is not collected.
 - (iii) This information is not collected.

10. Leases of real property exceeding five years

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

How many (if any) leases of real property with terms of more than five (5) years has the Anglican Church Property Trust (or the Diocese) granted in the past twenty-five (25) years and where, were or are they (if any) located?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Sydney Anglican Property, under the legal entity name of the Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney, has entered into 61 leases of real property with terms of more than five (5) years in the past twenty-five (25) years. These were situated at 31 different locations on behalf of 25 parishes across the Diocese. Some locations were the subject of multiple leases over this time period.

Parish	Location
Berry with Kangaroo Valley	Shoalhaven Road, Kangaroo Valley
Bondi	34 Ocean St, Bondi
Broadway	St Barnabas' Anglican Church site, Broadway
Cabramatta	42 Cumberland Street, Cabramatta
Cobbitty	335 Cobbitty Road, Cobbitty
Darlinghurst	120A Darlinghurst Road, Darlinghurst
Five Dock	177 Great North Road, Five Dock
Glebe	Bishopthorpe Church Hall, 132 St Johns Road, Glebe
Greystanes and Merrylands West	728 Merrylands Road, Merrylands West
Guildford with Villawood	St Mary's, Corner Guildford Road and Bolton Street, Guildford
Guildford with Villawood	2 Bolton Street, Guildford
Guildford with Villawood	341 Blaxcell Street, Granville
Hunters Hill	5 Reddish Close, Lane Cove North
Leichhardt	126A Norton Street, Leichhardt
Leichhardt	128 Norton St, Leichhardt
Manly	46-58 The Corso, Manly
Marrickville	Various suites and Shops, 332-334 Marrickville Road, Marrickville
Miranda	526 The Kingsway, Miranda

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Parish	Location
North Sydney	Cnr McLaren Street and Church Street, North Sydney
North Sydney	34 McLaren Street, North Sydney
Oakhurst	93 Hyatts Road, Oakhurst (Oakhurst church and Richard Johnson Anglican School)
Parramatta	69 Macquarie Street, Parramatta
Randwick	Unit, 20-24 The Avenue, Randwick
Sadleir	Part of 1-7 Spica Street, Sadleir
St James King Street (SJKS)	Various levels, 169 Phillip Street, Sydney (St James Hall)
Sydney - Christ Church St Laurence - Sydney	Ground Floor and First Floor of the building known as 812B George Street, Sydney
Sydney - Christ Church St Laurence	Part 505 Pitt Street, Sydney
Sydney - St Phillips	1 York Street, Sydney
Wollongong	Lot 1 Church Hill, Market St, Wollongong
Yagoona	590 Hume Highway, Yagoona

11. Parochial cost recoveries and Regents Park

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

With respect to Attachment 2 of the Explanatory Report on the *Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024*, why are no figures shown for Regents Park?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Regents Park parish ceased meeting in November 2021. Therefore, no offertory was received in the 2023 calendar year, which means there are no Variable Parochial Cost Recoveries (**PCR**) Charges for Regents Park in 2025.

Regents Park parish will be amalgamating with Berala parish on 1 November 2024.

12. Accessibility funding and support

Mrs Alison Pollard asked the following question –

- (a) The report on the draft *Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2024*, at Item 49 on page 257 of Synod Book 1, refers to an application by Youthworks for funding at \$140,000 p.a. for a Diocesan Accessibility coordinator and the report states this role is “not able to be funded in the draft budget”.
- (i) Does this application relate to the current work being done by the Rev Bec Baines which is funded by private specific, and ending, financial support?
 - (ii) How much of the ordinance which authorises expenditure of \$10,085,000 in 2025, is allocated to provide assistance to parishes in welcoming and supporting persons with disabilities?
 - (iii) Does any organisation under the control of Synod provide advice to parishes on these matters and, if so, what support is provided?

- (b) By Synod resolution 24/22, Synod encouraged parish councils to give consideration to the Accessibility Guidelines prepared by Dr Louise Gosbell in order to make their parish a welcoming and accessible place for all of the community. What support is provided to parish councils as they seek to implement this request of Synod?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a)
- (i) Yes.
- (ii) There is no specific allocation in 2025 for this purpose. The preparation of the Synod budget was undertaken by the Diocesan Resources Committee (**DRC**) and endorsed by the Standing Committee for promotion to Synod. The DRC is required to use the Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities, adopted by the Synod in 2023, as its key resource in determining the allocation of the available funds. The Statement of Funding Principles and Priorities did not identify assistance to parishes in welcoming and supporting persons with disabilities as either one of the ongoing priorities or a specific priority for the next triennium.
- (iii) Youthworks engages the Rev Bec Baines as a Diocesan Accessibility Ministry Advisor to provide assistance to parishes in welcoming and supporting persons with disabilities.
- The Social Issues Committee's publication, *Everyone Welcome: Accessible Church for All* (referred to in this question as the Accessibility Guidelines), also provides advice and guidance designed to assist parishes in eliminating barriers that may be preventing people with disability from participating in the full life of their church community. The Social Issues Committee is committed to ongoing review, and where necessary, further development or updating of this document as a continuing support resource for parishes.
- (b) The Social Issues Committee publication, *Everyone Welcome: Accessible Church for All*, is itself intended to be a comprehensive support resource for church leadership and Parish Councils. It offers practical guidance and advice to parishes about making their church property and ministries accessible for all. The publication also includes an extensive resource list of other books, articles, websites, publications and services that are available to help further educate and advise parishes on this matter.

In addition, the Rev Baines' advisory work with parishes focusses on providing practical guidance to Parish Councils, ministry teams and volunteer leaders on implementing the principles of Accessibility Ministry as outlined in *Everyone Welcome: Accessible Church for All*.

I am also currently considering new potential initiatives in consultation with Dr Gosbell.

13. Use of agreed upon procedures to review annual financial statements

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to Item 3.2 of the report of Standing Committee (Book 1, p.11) – Annual financial statements:

- (a) What are the main limitations of the work done under the “agreed upon procedures” rather than undertaking “formal audits” of the three Funds?
- (b) What is the approximate annual saving to the Diocese of undertaking the “agreed upon procedures” compared to “formal audits” of the three Funds?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

This question relates to a section of the Standing Committee's report on the annual financial statements for the Synod Funds, Parish Funds and the Synod – St Andrew's House Fund.

- (a) Under "agreed upon procedures", both the scope and materiality limits are specified in the description of procedures to be undertaken. This allows assurance work to be undertaken on key risks, processes, transactions and values as assessed by the Finance Committee of Standing Committee. The main limitations of the work done is that with a "formal audit", the auditor has complete discretion as to the scope and the materiality of the work undertaken, which is not the case with "agreed upon procedures".
- (b) The approximate annual saving cannot be estimated with any degree of precision because the auditor was not requested to provide a fee estimate for undertaking the "formal audit". However when agreed upon procedures were introduced, cost savings of 25 – 30% were achieved for the assurance work compared to the costs of the formal audit.

14. Provisional recognised churches

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to Item 3.4(2) of the report of Standing Committee – the *Recognised Churches Ordinance 2000* (Book 1, p.12):

Has the new process allowed by the amending ordinance yet been used?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

No.

15. Formulation of group governance policies by SDS

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to Item 3.4(5)(b) of the report of Standing Committee – the *Sydney Anglican Property (Provisional Restructuring) Ordinance 2023* (Book 1, p.12):

Why is it proposed that SDS, a service organisation to the Diocese, is to be empowered "to formulate group governance policies for bodies which centrally administer and manage the affairs of the Diocese"?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The concept of group governance policies arises from the design principles adopted by the Standing Committee to guide the review of central diocesan structures.

Group governance policies are intended to -

- (a) reduce duplication of effort and cost, and
- (b) enable consistent and best practice policy standards to apply in these areas across the central diocesan group of organisations.

Sydney Diocesan Services (**SDS**) has been given responsibility to formulate these policies, in consultation with central diocesan boards, as an expression of its purpose to regulate the central administration of the affairs of the Diocese. If the Synod agrees to reconstitute SDS as Sydney Anglican Services (**SAS**), it is proposed that SAS will continue to exercise this responsibility. In either case, this responsibility will be exercised as a service, both to the Synod and Standing Committee which have an overarching responsibility to ensure the central

diocesan structures are operating efficiently and effectively, and to the central diocesan boards concerned, to enable them to focus their attention on their core areas of responsibility.

Consistent with good governance, it is proposed that group governance policies will be adopted by central diocesan boards before they apply to those boards.

16. Reporting of steps taken in pursuit of the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to Item 7.25 of the report of Standing Committee - 21/23 Diocesan Organisations pursuing the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese (Book 1, p.25):

- (a) Is there a report published that summarises for Synod, information from “certain diocesan organisations to annually report to Synod a summary of the steps they have taken in pursuit of the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese. The Synod also encouraged all schools to annually report such a summary to the Synod”?
- (b) If not, is there an indication of when such a report might be published?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The information is contained in the annual reports of the relevant diocesan organisations.
Additionally, Standing Committee has agreed that, from 2025 onwards, the Diocesan Secretary will compile the annual reports submitted under clause 14 of the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995* into an online-only Synod book, published for Synod members via a secure portal, in addition to being tabled physically.
- (b) Not applicable.

17. Valuation of Investment in St Andrew’s House

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to the report of Standing Committee – Valuation of Investment in St Andrew’s House Corporation (Book 1, p.56-57):

- (a) What was the effect of the change of capitalisation rates in the valuation of the Tower and Car Park (from 5.75% to 6.75%) and Town Hall Square Arcade (from 6% to 6.25%) in the \$37.5m reduction in the fair value of the property?
- (b) What is the anticipated impact of this (or any other) change in the latest assessment of the value of the property on future distributions to the St Andrew’s House Fund and the EOS in:
 - (i) the next triennial funding period 2025-2027?
 - (ii) subsequent years (in current dollars)?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The effect was that the increase in capitalisation rates contributed to the decrease in the valuation of the property.
It is important to note however that this was just one of many factors considered by the external valuer.
The final value adopted by the external valuer took into consideration different valuation methodologies (each with their own inputs), including the capitalisation of net income method and the discounted cash flow method. A cross-check was also done using the direct comparison approach where the value was analysed against comparable properties on a rate per square metre of Net Lettable Area.

- (b) The cash distributions are not directly determined based on the market value of the property. They are primarily driven by the operating performance of the property including its occupancy rates, the rental income received, and the related operational costs.

18. Professional Development for Ministry Workers

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to the report of Standing Committee - Professional Development for Ministry Workers 54/22 Ministry Wellbeing and Development - Compliance and reporting (Book 1, p.132, para 39):

Can the Committee's reasons for not recommending "that participants' Professional Development be randomly audited, as is the case in other professions" be made available to the Synod?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The committee did not recommend participants' Professional Development being randomly audited because they trust the integrity of the ministry workers who make a detailed annual declaration of compliance (as outlined in paragraph 37 of the report). Further there are resourcing and privacy issues that make it difficult to conduct an audit.

19. Insurance costs for St Andrew's Cathedral

Mr David Minty asked the following question –

With respect to the report of Standing Committee - *Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2024* - Explanatory Report (Book 1, p.234, para 17):

Is it expected that a significant amount (i.e. more than half) of the cost of the Cathedral's insurance will need to be included in the parochial network costs in:

- (a) 2026?
- (b) subsequent years?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.

20. Nominated Organisations for the 53rd Synod

Mr David Lloyd asked the following question –

In respect of each of the 7 Nominated Organisations for the 53rd Synod, namely:

- (i) The Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid,
- (ii) Anglican Community Services (Anglicare),
- (iii) Anglican Media,
- (iv) Anglican Schools Corporation,
- (v) Anglican Youth and Education (Youthworks),
- (vi) Evangelism and New Churches, and
- (vii) Sydney Diocesan Services (**SDS**),

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- (a) What criteria or matters did the Standing Committee consider or apply when declaring in May 2023 for the 53rd Synod which diocesan organisations are Nominated Organisations under clause 24 of the *Synod Membership Ordinance 1995* for the purposes of Part 6 – Chief Executive Officers of Nominated Organisations of that Ordinance?
- (b) What is the gender of the 7 members appointed to the 53rd Synod in respect of Part 6 – Chief Executive Officers of Nominated Organisations?
- (c) Please identify any of the 7 Nominated Organisations for which the inherent requirements of the position of Chief Executive Officer of the organisation includes being male (for clarity, the term 'inherent requirements' is intended to include any requirement that the person be ordained to the presbyterate)?
- (d) As at 1 September 2024, what is the number of males and what is the number of females who are appointed to positions that are direct reports to the Chief Executive Officer of each of the 7 Nominated Organisations, inclusive of persons acting in a direct report position, and please provide this information separately for each organisation?
- (e) Does the governing board (however described) of each of the 7 Nominated Organisations have in place an active succession planning process for the position of Chief Executive Officer of the organisation that, in part, seeks to improve the balance of male and female potential successors to that position, and please identify those organisations that have such a process and any that do not?
- (f) Do each of the 7 Nominated Organisations have in place an active succession planning process that, in part, seeks to improve the balance of male and female potential successors as direct reports to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the organisation, and please identify those organisations that have such a process and any that do not?
- (g) Has the Diocese of Sydney or the Standing Committee considered or adopted any plans, strategies or approaches that may enhance the gender diversity of persons appointed as Chief Executive Officers of the 7 Nominated Organisations, and (Sydney) Diocesan organisations more generally, and if so please provide details of such plans, strategies or approaches?
- (h) Is there an indicative timeframe for the potential future appointment of a female Chief Executive Officer in respect of each of the 7 Nominated Organisations, subject to proper selection and appointment processes as a vacancy may arise from time to time, and if so, what is that timeframe?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The Standing Committee made its declaration based on nominations received from Standing Committee members. The Standing Committee does not record the reasons for any of its elections or appointments.
- (b) All are male.
- (c) There are none.
- (d)
 - (i) The Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid (Anglican Aid): 2 men, 2 women.
 - (ii) Anglicare: 4 men, 6 women.
 - (iii) Anglican Media: 3 men, 3 women.
 - (iv) Anglican Schools Corporation: 2 men, 3 women.
 - (v) Youthworks: 8 men, 2 women.
 - (vi) Evangelism and New Churches (**ENC**): 1 man, 1 woman. The ENC Director also supervises a number of staff deployed as planters and as evangelist and trainers, many of whom are female.
 - (vii) SDS: 3 men, 4 women.

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- (e) This part of the question is out of order under Synod Business rule 6.3(4)(c) as it makes an imputation that the gender balance of potential successors should be improved.
- (f) This part of the question is out of order under Synod Business rule 6.3(4)(c) as it makes an imputation that the gender balance of direct reports should be improved.
- (g) This part of the question is out of order under Synod Business rule 6.3(4)(c) as it makes an imputation that the gender diversity of persons appointed as CEOs of the 7 Nominated Organisations and Diocesan organisations should be enhanced.
- (h)
 - (i) Anglican Aid: The Members of Anglican Aid have not discussed the future appointment of a female CEO.
 - (ii) Anglicare: The current CEO of Anglicare is halfway through his first term and has the Board's full support in his role. There is no timing suggested or agreed as to when he might finish in his role. However, when the Board is next called upon to consider the recruitment of a new CEO, it will turn its mind to candidates, both female and male, who would be eligible and qualified for the role. The Board is open to, and would be delighted with, the appointment of a female into that role. Gender is an important component of the succession planning process.
 - (iii) Anglican Media: The Anglican Media Council is not currently in a position to do this given the uncertainty about how it will be governed in the future.
 - (iv) Anglican Schools Corporation: No.
 - (v) Youthworks: The current Youthworks CEO is 2 years into a 5 year contract.
 - (vi) ENC: No. There is no indicative timeframe because currently there is no reason the Director of ENC could not be a female should a suitable candidate apply and the Board determine they were the best candidate.
 - (vii) SDS: No.

21. Use of NDAs and pastoral care of Assistant Ministers and other ministry staff

The Rev Mark Groombridge asked the following question –

- (a) Regarding the pastoral care of Assistant Ministers and lay ministers (and other key ministry staff such as Children's and Youth ministers and student ministers), in the past 5 years, how many such ordained staff:
 - (i) Left their position in their parish for another Anglican parish due to irreconcilable differences with their parish's Senior Minister?
 - (ii) Left their position in their parish for another non-parish ministry role due to irreconcilable differences with their parish's Senior Minister?
 - (iii) Left their position in their parish for another denomination due to irreconcilable differences with their parish's Senior Minister?
 - (iv) Left their position in their parish due to mental health issues (e.g. burn-out)?
- (b) Regarding the pastoral care of Assistant Ministers and lay ministers (and other key ministry staff such as Children's and Youth ministers and student ministers), in the past 5 years, how many such ordained staff:
 - (i) Have been asked to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (**NDA**) at the request of their parish's Senior Minister?
 - (ii) Signed a NDA at the request of their parish's Senior Minister?
 - (iii) What percentage of NDAs were signed which would fit into the category defined by paragraph 36(i) of the report?
- (c) Does the Archbishop and his See consider a Senior Minister to be acting above reproach (1 Tim 3:2, 10; Titus 1:6) if they request their ordained staff to consent to signing an NDA in circumstances outside of paragraph 36? In such circumstances, how is the Archbishop's See keeping Senior Ministers accountable?

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- (d) If NDAs are an acceptable practice with the Sydney Diocese (according to paragraph 36 of the report):
- (i) To what extent is the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, Bishops, Archdeacons or similar) and SDS employees (e.g. Parish HR Partner) involved in the formation and signing of these NDA agreements?
 - (ii) What members of the Archbishop's See are involved or will be involved in the process of signing a NDA to ensure that Senior Ministers are kept accountable to being above reproach?
 - (iii) What members of SDS are involved in the process of signing a NDA?
 - (iv) What legal assistance is provided to Assistant Ministers and lay ministers (and other key ministry staff such as Children's and Youth ministers and student ministers) to assist them in making informed decisions about signing NDAs?
- (e) What ministry structures have been established, maintained or considered by the Archbishop's See for the pastoral care of ordained Assistant Ministers and lay ministers (and other key ministry staff such as Children's and Youth ministers and student ministers) in the past 5 years?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) There is no available dataset from which to answer this part of the question.
- We do know that in the last 5 years, there have been four Assistant Ministers who made mental health related Stipend Continuance Insurance claims who have left their parishes.
- (b) There is no comprehensive dataset against which to answer this part of the question.
- An incomplete answer can be given based on what is known to the lawyers at SDS Legal, who assist parishes with employment disputes.
- At one level, almost all employed parish staff are asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement (**NDA**) as their employment contract usually includes a term requiring confidential information they become aware of in the course of employment to only be used for the proper performance of their duties. This is unexceptional and part of how an employer demonstrates it has taken reasonable steps to secure personal information for the purposes of the *Privacy Act* (such as health and pastoral information relating to parishioners). A similar expectation is made of ordained staff consistent with their obligations under *Faithfulness in Service*, but as they are not employees, they do not sign a contract.
- There have been occasions where parish staff are asked to sign a deed of release in the context of a dispute to document agreed terms of settlement for the dispute. The deeds will usually include non-disclosure provisions in respect to the settlement sum and other incidental matters.
- SDS Legal is aware of eight such deeds entered into in the last five years in a parish context. Two related to ordained assistant ministers. One signed the deed and the other did not.
- SDS Legal is not aware of the use of any NDA or other similar document that would meet the description in paragraph 36(i) of the report.
- (c) No. Barring circumstances the report has not contemplated, and except for those kinds of NDAs considered in paragraph 36 of the report, I do not consider that Senior Ministers should ask ordained ministers to sign an NDA. I envisage that should Synod pass the motions at M1 our ability to hold Senior Ministers to account in this regard will be strengthened.
- (d)
- (i) Neither my office nor the senior staff are involved in drafting or signing NDAs in a parish context. From time to time, I or members of my team may sign NDAs in fulfillment of our responsibilities in service of the Diocese or on behalf of

organisations we serve in a governance capacity. Sometimes these involve myself or members of my team undertaking to keep information confidential.

The lawyers at SDS Legal assist parishes with workplace disputes, including preparing documentation to settle a dispute. This will often include incidental terms on confidentiality that are consistent with the principles in paragraph 36 of the Report.

- (ii) The principles articulated in the report to Synod envisage parishes, schools, and organisations forming their own policies or making pledges that relate to the use of NDAs. Once such policies are written it is possible that I or members of my team may be involved in encouraging parishes, schools, and organisations to act in a way that is consistent with the commitments they've made.
 - (iii) See answer to (i).
 - (iv) None is provided. They would need to seek their own legal advice. SDS Legal provides legal services to parishes, diocesan organisations and other charities and does not advise individual employees and officeholders on matters that affect them personally. This applies to both Senior Ministers and Assistants.
- (e) I continue to be very concerned for the pastoral care of ministry workers across the Diocese. As a result I have, amongst other things, provided support to ministry workers through the direct pastoral care offered by me or members of my team, supported ongoing leave provisions that help to sustain workers, and supported the provision of the Clergy Assistance Program, the continued work of the Parish HR Partner, and the introduction of Pastoral Supervision requirements.

22. Breaches of Faithfulness in Service

Miss Jan Syme asked the following question –

- (a) How many clergy and lay workers have been investigated by the Professional Standards Committee over the last 6 years?
- (b) How many of these were found to have breached one of the Faithfulness in Service conditions?
 - (i) How many of these were stood down?
 - (ii) How many of the breached conditions were about bullying?
- (a) How many breached two or more of the Faithfulness in Service conditions?
 - (i) How many of these were stood down?
 - (ii) How many of these included bullying as at least one of the breaches?
- (b) The Archbishop in the latest Southern Cross has written “no place for misconduct and abuse”. Does this apply to bullying?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The Professional Standards Committee (now known as the Ministry Standards Committee) does not conduct its own investigations into complaints against clergy and church workers. The MSC receives and reviews material furnished to it by the Director of Safe Ministry in relation to complaints received under the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 (MSO)* including any investigation reports prepared by an investigator appointed by the Director.

Although the question is framed using the language of investigation, the intention behind the question appears to be a request for the total number of complaints considered by the MSC in the last 6 years. The number and range of matters considered by the MSC is such that greater clarity is required to answer the question with accuracy. Some matters are declined, dismissed, deferred or withdrawn with the concurrence of the MSC prior to notice to the respondent. The MSC also has other functions under the MSO.

The ODSM/SMB annual reports over the last 6 years record that since 2019, the MSC has considered 143 matters. Detailed analysis would be required to clarify the stage to which these matters reached and whether they could accurately be described as having been 'investigated' by the MSC in answer to question (a).

- (b) There is no easy mechanism in place to extract the information requested at part (b). To respond would require a detailed file review which is not possible at this time, however, the following comments are made in response to question (b):
- The MSC is not empowered to make formal findings except in the limited circumstance where it may make a finding of no misconduct (under clause 37).
 - The code of conduct *Faithfulness in Service* is one point of reference against which conduct may be measured and considered. Not every complaint will involve consideration of the conduct specifically against the standards and guidelines set out in *Faithfulness in Service*. The MSO itself also contains defined categories of misconduct against which complaints are also considered.
 - The term "bullying", as a descriptor for complaints, is often used in a broad sense. Several of the complaints received that have been categorised by the complainant as a bullying complaint, may or may not amount to bullying as defined in the Ordinance or in the Code of Conduct, but rather encompass a range of conduct around leadership or interpersonal style which may include examples of bullying behaviours or emotional abuse. Accordingly, a number of matters could be described as fitting within this broad category of "bullying" complaints.
 - Of the complaints that might be generally categorised as "bullying" complaints:
 - Some are currently in progress;
 - Three (3) involved resignations;
 - The outcome of the others is varied including:
 - training;
 - counselling;
 - professional supervision;
 - other restrictions, conditions or undertakings;
 - psychological assessment;
 - admonishment; and
 - no further action.
- (c) Refer to the response to part (b).
- (d) Yes.

23. Gilbulla Memorial Conference Centre

Miss Jan Syme asked the following question –

What steps have been taken for finding a replacement Diocesan conference centre, after Gilbulla was sold about 20 years? Are the monies from the Gilbulla sale still set aside for this purpose?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Following the sale of the Gilbulla conference centre, the net proceeds were assigned to Youthworks and used to purchase a large guest house on the Central Coast. This was seen as a suitable complement to Youthworks' existing portfolio of diocesan conference centres. However, local council restrictions on the use of that guest house rendered it unsustainable as a conference centre and the property was sold. At every meeting of Youthworks Council the CFO reports that the net proceeds from the sale of Gilbulla continue to be "earmarked as Gilbulla proceeds to fund the acquisition of another conference centre site," in keeping with the intent of the original assignment of funds.

24. Standing Committee circular 15 December 2023

The Rev David Clarke asked the following question –

With respect to the Circular of 15th December 2023 sent by SDS on behalf of Standing Committee to Rectors, Wardens and Treasurers, “Minister’s Discretionary Benefits Accounts – Limitations on GST Input Tax Credits” –

- (a) Was there a subcommittee of Standing Committee formed to investigate this matter?
- (b) If there was a subcommittee who were the members of this committee?
- (c) From whom was professional tax advice sought?
- (d) Did Standing Committee see a copy of any professional advice given upon which it appears the Circular and advice was based?
- (e) Were dissenting or differing opinions considered?
- (f) Are there changes in tax law that parishes should be aware of since the Diocesan presentations regarding the change from MEAs to MDBAs in 2022?
- (g) Is there a Non Disclosure Agreement regarding how the Standing Committee reached a decision that effectively cuts the take home pay of clergy that this circular describes with the words “*Implementing the changes recommended in this circular will lead to a reduction in the amount available*”?
- (h) What efforts are made to ensure the clarity and intelligibility of Diocesan circulars for those who are not taxation experts?
- (i) In light of parishes being sent a circular stating “*this guidance is not definitive without a tax ruling*”, is SDS aware of any parishes seeking their own tax ruling?
- (j) After the sending out of the circular, did the Standing Committee or any subcommittees receive feedback given to SDS staff regarding –
 - (i) the impact on clergy of a decision by Standing Committee to effectively cut take home pay of ministers during a time of high inflation?
 - (ii) the impact the timing chosen to communicate these financial changes a week before Christmas?
 - (iii) the impression such changes and the manner in which they were undertaken communicates about the value and care of clergy in this Diocese?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question is out of order under Synod Standing Orders 6.3(4)(c) and (g) as it offers an argument and seeks a legal opinion.

Nonetheless, I will make some comments.

The Standing Committee has declared its deliberations on this matter to be confidential to its members.

The timing of the communications sent to parishes was a product of the process the Standing Committee undertook to make decisions on the issue, and also due to a conviction that the circular needed to be sent with some urgency to ensure compliance with the law before the next business activity statements were due.

SDS makes considerable efforts to communicate in a helpful manner to parishes. Its circulars include sections setting out key points and action items that summarise the content and implications of the circular. An explanation is provided in the body of the circular for those who require more detail. SDS is open to feedback on how its communications can be made more effective.

The substance of the feedback given to SDS staff in response to the circular was shared with the subcommittee.

25. Synod voting processes

Dr Robert Pryor asked the following question –

Considering the urgency of being efficient in time use in Synod and the large amounts of time devoted to the process of voting, counting and reporting results, has consideration been given to replacing cumbersome paper procedures with digitalized methods using apps on mobile phones or other less unwieldy methods?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

Yes.

The process used by Synod when voting by ballot may seem well-suited to replacement by an electronic process, however several barriers have so far prevented moving to electronic voting. The barriers stem from the need for the voting process to ensure that every Synod member present may reliably and successfully vote once in each ballot, and include –

- (a) internet access is not sufficiently reliable to ensure the use of every member's personal device to vote,
- (b) we cannot rely on every member having a suitable device,
- (c) the purchase or rental of specialised voting devices that do not rely on an internet connection is administratively inefficient and cost-prohibitive, and
- (d) a hybrid-solution, offering electronic-voting for members able to do so and paper for the rest, could not reasonably be expected to improve efficiency while maintaining accuracy.

Nevertheless, the Synod Secretary is continuing to investigate options and expects that these barriers may be overcome in coming years. Members may also refer to comments on this matter in paragraph 46 of Appendix 1 of the Explanatory Report to the Bill for the *Archbishop of Sydney Election Ordinance 1982 Amendment Ordinance 2024*, found on page 290 of Synod Book 1.

26. Historical stipend recommendation

Mr Jonathan Miller asked the following question –

What is the historical stipend recommendation for rectors for the last 20 years (if possible) including year on year % increase?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question is shown in table form [and will be available on the noticeboard in the foyer and the SDS website].

Historical Stipend recommendation for Rectors for the last 20 Years		
Effective from	Actual Stipend \$	% increase over previous year
1 January 2024	76,170	4.5%
1 July 2023	72,890	2.4%
1 July 2022	71,182	2.4%

Historical Stipend recommendation for Rectors for the last 20 Years		
Effective from	Actual Stipend \$	% increase over previous year
1 July 2021	69,514	2.4%
1 January 2021	67,856	0%
1 January 2020	67,856	1.6%
1 January 2019	66,787	1.6%
1 January 2018	65,714	0%
1 January 2017	65,714	1.4%
1 January 2016	64,810	4.0%
1 January 2015	62,317	0.7%
1 January 2014	61,855	5.8%
1 January 2013	58,452	4.6%
1 January 2012	55,867	5.0%
1 January 2011	53,207	5.0%
1 January 2010	50,673	0%
1 January 2009	50,673	1.6%
1 January 2008	49,891	5.3%
1 January 2007	47,362	3.1%
1 January 2006	45,926	5.0%
1 January 2005	43,736	6.3%
1 January 2004	41,128	3.8%

27. Decline in attendance

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

Acknowledging God's sovereignty, and reflecting upon the '64/23 Attendance Patterns' report identifying decline in attendance generally and in 'newcomers' specifically; how do we discern if –

- (a) decline is acceptable so long as we are 'faithful' or if
- (b) the decline is an indication of our lack of zeal and innovation for the gospel, and so a sign of our lack of faithfulness?

To which the President replied –

The 'theological reflections' section of the 'Attendance Patterns Review Committee' report says in paragraphs 12 and 13 –

"While we hope and pray that churches would grow, there is very little exegetical or theological evidence to suggest that all churches, in all locations and all ages will always grow. There are lots of things that make up a healthy church. Growth in numbers is potentially one of them. Growth on its own is not a sign of a healthy church, and lack of growth on its own is not evidence that a church is not healthy.

"We reject the tacit accompanying idea that 'good ministers' will always see growth and lack of growth is always proof of 'poor ministry.' Jeremiah and Isaiah, and even Paul, conducted 'good ministry' but this was not always met with numerical growth. While church numerical growth is in a sense the easiest metric

to measure, there are a complementary range of other focuses to improve the spiritual health of our churches.”

In my Presidential Address I encouraged us all to reflect on the findings in the report in a humble, open, and prayerful way.

There will also be an opportunity for further reflection on this matter during the debate at M16.

28. Ministry leadership

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

The 2011 report ‘2/10 Towards 2050’ stated that –

‘Humanly speaking, leadership in our parochial units is the single greatest determining factor as to whether our churches are growing or not’.

In the light of the ‘64/23 Attendance Patterns’ report:

- (a) Do we affirm this statement is still an accurate observation of ministry leadership today?
- (b) If so, what actions are and can be taken to better equip our parish leaders to be more effective in facilitating numeric growth within our churches?

To which the President replied –

The Attendance Patterns Review report identifies certain factors contributing to church growth and decline. See page 102 of the report. If M16 is passed, Standing Committee will be asked what can be done to equip our parish leaders.

The Attendance Patterns Review Committee has recommended some actions in its report. See in particular paragraphs 113, 114, 116, 118, 120 of the report.

29. Young adult attendance patterns

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

The 2013 review of Mission (31/12 Review of the Diocesan Mission), identified that: ‘a slight increase in the proportion of newcomers in Sydney Anglican congregations from 1991 to 2001 has been replaced by a decrease since 2001. This is a very significant trend which, if it was to continue, would be expected to impact on the numbers of young adults in the Sydney Diocese... and ultimately upon church growth trends.’

Given the observations within the ‘64/23 Attendance Patterns’ report showing a continuing decline in ‘Newcomers’ to 2023 –

- (a) What are the specific numbers of young adult attenders in our churches between 2013-2023?
- (b) Does this data identify declining effectiveness of ministry to young adults?
- (c) Is the decline in ‘newcomers’ an indication of decreasing effectiveness in evangelism generally?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) There is no available data from which to answer this part of the question.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) As observed in my Presidential Address, the numbers are not self-interpreting, and require local, careful, and prayerful interpretation.

30. Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF)

Mr Matthew Robson asked the following question –

Noting that this week Housing Australia announced it had notified applicants of the outcomes of the first funding round for the HAFF program –

- (a) Did the Diocese participate in the process?
- (b) Approximately how many applications were made?
- (c) What was our success rate?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Eleven applications were made by Sydney Anglican Property on behalf of parishes. Two applications were also made by Anglicare.
- (c) No public announcement can be made at this time. Members can access general information about the Diocese's involvement in the Housing Australia Future Fund program in the August-September issue of Southern Cross, as well as SAP e-newsletters and the SAP website.

31. The Attendance Patterns Report

Mr Michael Doran asked the following question –

Questions to Standing Committee and the Attendance Patterns Committee about the content, recommendations, inferences and implications of the Attendance Patterns Report –

- (a) The NCLS indicator, 'a strong sense of belonging': What do the committees believe are the characteristics of leaders that foster a 'strong sense of belonging?'
- (b) Declines in large churches: What congregational, diocesan and local factors have the committees identified regarding the decline in attendance within large churches, and the reduction in the number of large churches?
- (c) The correlation between large churches, and a sense of belonging: How do large churches foster a strong sense of belonging?
- (d) Characteristics and availability of senior ministers fitted for large church leadership: What do the committees believe are the specific characteristics of senior ministers who are suited for leadership of large churches, and does the Diocese have enough of such ministers in the pipeline?
- (e) Training senior ministers for large church ministry: What is the pathway for ministers in readiness for leadership of large churches, and how is the Diocese growing these capabilities?
- (f) The desire to build large church buildings in the greenfields: Given the observations about decline in attendance within large churches, what lessons can the Diocese learn, especially when the churches being hoped for, designed and built in the greenfields areas are often large scale (e.g. auditoriums of 500+ seats)?
- (g) About 'fresh priorities': What would 'a fresh priority on winning newcomers/converts' to Jesus look like in contrast to what is true today?
- (h) About apparent complacency in outreach: How would the committee respond to the suggestion that some of the recommendations imply that many of our ministers are complacent about reaching unchurched people in the community? In the opinion of the committees, what more should they be doing?
- (i) About patterns of church members who are occasional in attendance (e.g., 3 weeks in 5, or 25 turn-ups per year): Though not the focus of the report, what observations has the committee made about the attendance patterns of committed Christian members of

congregations who are in a pattern of only occasional attendance. How widespread is this pattern, is it new, does it matter, and what are your suggested approaches to address this?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The questions, while helpful, are beyond the terms of reference given to the Attendance Patterns Committee, and not matters on which the committee can make observations and offer reflections. They would form a useful basis for reflection at a church and mission area level.

32. Attendance patterns and the South Western Region Draft Buildings and Property Strategy

The Rev Dr Stephen Anderson asked the following question –

Given the contrast between –

- (a) the statistical findings detailed in Appendix C of this year's Attendance Patterns Report, and
- (b) the target capacity explicitly presupposed for each parish in last year's South Western Region Draft Buildings and Property Strategy (p. 21) –

are there plans for the strategic presuppositions of the latter document (and its wider family of documents) to be reviewed in light of the findings of the former?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

No. There are no plans to revise the strategic presuppositions of the Ministry-led Buildings and Property Strategies in light of the findings of the Attendance Patterns Report. Appendix F of the South Western Region Buildings and Property Strategy already includes detailed sensitivity analyses that highlights the implications of modifying the strategic presuppositions.

33. Higher Education Loan Program (HELP)

The Rev Dr Stephen Anderson asked the following question –

- (a) What planning has commenced around the impact of –
 - (i) the renewable HELP loan limit and
 - (ii) the 7-year HELP entitlement limit (introduced respectively in 2020 and 2022) upon those pursuing formal theological training?
- (b) Is there some suitably qualified group designing a pathway to ameliorate the foreseeable financial impediments to theological training, and especially the track towards ordination?
- (c) If so, what is the envisaged timeline until this is reflected in Synod's Allocations and Appropriations Bill?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question refers to two legislated changes that have affected students' access to HELP loans and to study in a Commonwealth Supported Place (**CSP**). The first and key legislated change came into effect in January 2020, which was that the HELP loan limit for students accessing FEE-HELP from that time on would be inclusive of student debt accrued under HECS-HELP. Prior to this change, a student could accrue a HECS debt from study at a public university and this would not affect the amount they were entitled to put on FEE-HELP. An

impact of this change in legislation is that some students may not be able to access a FEE-HELP loan to cover the entirety of their course.

The second change referred to in the question relates to Commonwealth Supported Places (**CSPs**). CSPs are government subsidies which primarily exist in undergraduate courses at public universities. In 2022, the government implemented the Student Learning Entitlement, which provides students with seven years of full-time equivalent subsidised study in CSPs. While a few independent higher education institutions have CSPs, Moore College, Youthworks College, and most theological colleges do not have CSPs. This legislative change therefore does not currently have any direct bearing on study at Moore College or Youthworks College.

(a)

- (i) Regarding the impact of the change to the HELP loan limit introduced in 2020, Moore College is very aware of the potential impact on students and their finances and has been planning for this for some time. The matter has been addressed at the level of the Governing Board and is regularly reviewed by its Audit and Finance Committee.

Some responses made by Moore College include:

- The FEE-HELP bill accrued by students is a matter of discussion in student admission interviews, where they are asked specifically how they have planned to finance their way through College should their loan limit be reached;
- The Registrar's Department uses a government reporting system to monitor when students are approaching their loan limit and notifies students in advance. Students are also able to track their loan limit themselves; and
- The College continues to build bursary funds to assist those students who reach their FEE-HELP limit sometime during their time of study and assists them with fundraising through the provision of the Student Support Fund. The College has employed a part-time staff member to manage the fund and to provide personal support and training in fundraising to students that access the fund.

Youthworks' Year 13 program previously included degree-level study. This was removed from the program in part because of the legislative change to HELP limits. As a discipleship gap year, Year 13 did not want students to decrease the amount of HELP available when it could be better used for those who want to pursue vocational ministry training at Youthworks College and Moore College.

- (ii) The seven-year CSP entitlement introduced in 2022 does not significantly impact on study at Moore College, Youthworks College, or most other theological institutions.
- (b) The Audit and Finance Committee of Moore College's Governing Board has suitably qualified people who regularly review financial impediments to theological training.
- (c) This part of the question is out of order under Synod Business rule 6.3(4)(a) as it contains an assertion concerning future Synod Appropriations and Allocation Bills. Nonetheless I am informed that there is no expectation of this matter affecting the Synod's Allocations and Appropriations Bill, at least in the short to medium term.

34. Anglicare research funding

Mr Gavin Jones asked the following question –

Can you please give a rationale for why Anglicare Research is proposed to be defunded in the next triennium?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

A decision not to fund an application (or to increase or decrease funding for an area) is not made in isolation. Each application is weighed according to the Statement of Funding Principles agreed by the Synod, following the process outlined at paragraph 6 on page 251 of Synod Book 1. Each proposal is weighed against all of the other potential uses of funds. It should also be noted that an important principle for these allocations is that prior funding does not guarantee funding in this Triennium.

35. Diocesan Governance Policy and Corporation Schools

The Rev Andrew Schmidt asked the following question –

Reference is made to the Diocesan Governance Policy, Appendix 1 (page 215). Questions –

- (a) Which category of organisation is an individual Corporation School (as distinct from the Schools Corporation itself)?
- (b) Consequently, will Corporation School heads be required to sign the Statement of Organisational Faithfulness?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

This question is out of order under Synod Standing Order 6.3(4)(g) as it seeks a legal opinion.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions about the operation of the Diocesan Governance Policy when we reach item B5 of the Business Paper.

36. Confirmation statistics

The Rev Andrew Schmidt asked the following question –

- (a) How many individuals were confirmed in the Diocese in 2023?
- (b) How many parishes have not held a confirmation service in the last 5 years?
- (c) What is the episcopal team’s pastoral response to any parishes which appear to be “not doing confirmation” anymore?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) This information is not consistently collected centrally. It is not possible to collect data from parishes in the time given.
- (b) We are aware of at least 40 parishes.
- (c) The response depends on the circumstances of each parish.

37. Age demographic data

The Rev Andrew Schmidt asked the following question –

In reference to the excellent “Attendance Patterns” report –

- (a) Is information available to show in detail the age distribution by decades of the members of our churches? That is, the number of members aged 0-9, the number aged 10-19, the number aged 20-29 and so on?
- (b) If not, would the authors of the report consider the collection of such information to be useful and feasible?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

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- (a) No.
- (b) The Attendance Patterns Committee has not discussed this matter.

38. Network Costs

Mr Mark Robinson asked the following question –

The *Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance* report shows that Network Costs have increased from \$5.2m in 2016 to \$11.3m in 2025. (Book 1 p235). That is an increase of 117% over a decade whereas church operating receipts have only increased by 36% over the same period.

- (a) Since 2016, what additional costs have been included in Network Costs which were not included in 2016?
- (b) What is the amount of those additional costs included in the 2025 total of Network Costs?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) There is one new component of the Parochial Network Costs, being the ACPT Management fee payable by all parishes with property.

The following table contains a comparison of the components of the Parochial Network Costs between 2016 and 2025 together with the parish Net Operating Receipts for the respective years.

[It is not practical to read the table of numbers out loud. The table and answer will be available on the notice board in the foyer.]

PCR Comparison - 2016 - 2025		
	2016	2025
Parish Property & Liability Insurance Program	\$3,700,000	\$8,157,288
Parish Risk Management Program	\$221,000	\$277,838
Professional Standards Unit (Now Office of the Director of Safe Ministry)		
- Parish related costs	\$751,000	\$1,530,000
- Reimbursing Synod Risk Reserve for non-standard operating costs	\$90,000	\$ -
Safe Ministry Training Program	\$139,000	\$162,240
Provision for relief and remission of PCR charges	\$10,000	\$ -
Parish contribution to the cost of Diocesan Archives	\$68,000	\$82,105
Fee for managing the PCR Fund 951	\$194,000	\$246,029
ACPT Management fee payable by all parishes with property	\$ -	\$1,185,000
Less - Amount drawn from the working capital in PCR fund 951		\$(258,000)
Less - Amount drawn from the working capital in Long Service Leave Fund 953		\$(100,000)
Total - Parochial Network Costs	\$5,173,000	\$11,282,500

PCR Comparison - 2016 - 2025		
	2016	2025
Increase - \$		\$6,109,500
Increase - %		118%
Total Operating Receipts -\$M	101.2	138
Increase - \$M		\$37
Increase - %		36%

- (b) The amount of the ACPT Management fee payable by all parishes with property in 2025 is budgeted at \$1,185,000, (2016 \$Nil).

For completeness, in 2016 the network costs included \$90,000 for reimbursing the Synod Risk Reserve for non-standard operating costs, whereas the corresponding amount for 2025 is Nil. The 2025 network costs also include two negative items of \$258,000 and \$100,000 respectively representing a reduction in the amount of the network costs to be recovered through PCR due to 'recycling' excess capital from the PCR Fund 951 and the Long Service Leave Fund 953. There were no corresponding items in 2016.

39. Moore Theological College enrolments

The Rev Dr Raj Gupta asked the following question –

In relation to Moore College enrolments:

- (a) How many students (male, female, and total) are enrolled in a Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Divinity –
- (i) First year,
 - (ii) Second year,
 - (iii) Third year, and
 - (iv) Fourth year?
- (b) How many ordination candidates are there in each year of College?
- (c) What is the number of first year students (in a Bachelor of Theology or Bachelor of Divinity degree) in each of the last 5 years?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answer to this question is shown in table form [and will be available on the notice board in the foyer and on the SDS website].

- (a)

Year	Female	Male	Grand Total
1	23	60	83
2	15	45	60
3	13	38	51
4	7	36	43

(b)

Year	# candidates/seeking candidacy in Sydney
1	10
2	17
3	20
4	19
TOTAL	66

(c)

Year	# students
2020	45
2021	66
2022	53
2023	66
2024	64

* The figures here are the number of commencing students for the year and do not include those who, by virtue of advanced standing from prior studies, enter straight into second year.

40. Counselling related to the Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire

Mrs Nicola Fortescue asked the following question –

- (a) How many people who have completed the Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire have taken up the offer of follow-up counselling or support paid for by the Diocese?
- (b) Has the offer of counselling or support ever been offered to people for the purpose of support during the completion of the questionnaire?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The CLQ is a significant pastoral conversation centred around personal godliness and suitability for Christian ministry.

The Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire (**CLQ**) is part of the Safe Ministry Check process under the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* required for ordination candidates, clergy seeking a licence and lay ministers seeking authorisation from the Archbishop for ministry in the Diocese. Completion of the CLQ form is accompanied by an interview of the applicant. These interviews are conducted by Regional Bishops and the Archdeacon for Women, their Assistants, or MT&D.

- (a) 151 applicants have been approved for payment of counselling sessions. 122 have taken the opportunity to use some or all of their sessions.
- (b) No. Counselling has not been offered when applicants fill out the questionnaire form. However, counselling and support are offered during the interview process.

41. License/consecration of former Church of St Mark's, Freemans Reach

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Why was the licence of the former Church of St Mark's, Freemans Reach revoked?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The licence of St Mark's, Freemans Reach was revoked by request of the rector and parish council as a result of a decision to focus the ministry at St John's, Wilberforce.

42. License/consecration of Grace West Anglican Church

Mr Samuel Doherty asked the following question –

Why has (as at the time of publication of the 2022 – 2023 Year Book) Grace West Anglican Church – Silverdale not been licensed or consecrated as a church?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

This building has not yet been licensed as it is a new building, and it was subsequently overlooked. This will be addressed soon.

43. Clergy Demographics

The Rev Michael Leite asked the following question –

In each year from 2013 to 2023 within all Diocesan Parishes:

- (a) How many full time Presbyters in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (b) How many part time Presbyters in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (c) How many full time Deacons in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (d) How many part time Deacons in total were licensed in the Diocese?
- (e) How many full time licensed lay ministers in total were employed in the Diocese?
- (f) How many part time licensed lay ministers in total were employed in the Diocese?
- (g) How many ordained ministers left Parish work in the Diocese (excluding retirement)?
- (h) How many full time licensed lay ministers left Parish work in the Diocese (excluding retirement)?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The answers to parts (a) to (f) are set out in table form. [It is not practical to read the table of numbers out loud. The table and answer will be available on the notice board in the foyer and on the SDS website.]

It is not possible to answer parts (g) and (h) accurately in the time available.

	FT Presbyters	PT Presbyters	FT Deacons	PT Deacons	FT Lay	PT Lay
2013	301	35	60	26	119	84
2014	341	45	63	30	136	76
2015	343	43	61	38	149	82
2016	338	44	70	38	141	124
2017	342	42	86	41	144	164
2018	337	42	95	43	143	237

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	FT Presbyters	PT Presbyters	FT Deacons	PT Deacons	FT Lay	PT Lay
2019	333	38	98	47	159	279
2020	327	39	112	46	163	313
2021	313	42	133	40	166	320
2022	308	46	139	36	175	325
2023	311	41	151	34	182	313

Note: the references to full-time (FT) and part-time (PT) refer to the type of licence or authority issued. It is not possible to be ordained as a presbyter or as a deacon on a part-time basis. However, it is possible for a presbyter or a deacon to be licenced on a part-time basis. The table above reflects this understanding.

44. Retirement demographics

The Rev Michael Leite asked the following question –

In each year from 2024 to 2034 within all Diocesan Parishes:

- (a) How many of the current ordained ministers will reach the retirement age of 67?
- (a) How many of the current licensed lay ministers will reach the retirement age of 67?

To which the President replied –

I am informed the answer is as follows –

The answer is a table of numbers which is not practical to read out loud. The answer will be available on the notice board in the foyer and on the SDS website. The answer assumes all current ordained and lay ministers will reach the retirement age.

Year	Current licensed clergy	Current authorised lay ministers
2024	4	2
2025	5	2
2026	7	4
2027	9	5
2028	9	4
2029	10	2
2030	7	3
2031	7	5
2032	6	4
2033	11	3
2034	8	6
Total	83	40

45. Deeds of Release

The Rev Michael Doyle asked the following question –

Noting the Archbishop's answers to question (b)(i) on item 4.21 on the business papers on 17/9/2024, of the 8 deeds the Archbishop is aware of:

- (a) Would any, if signed, have prevented the staff member or office holder from reporting any allegations of unacceptable behaviour to the relevant bishop or to the ODSM? If so, how many?
- (b) Was the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or any SDS employee in any way involved in the formatting, signing, passing on, recommendation or communication of these deeds to the staff members or assistant ministers?
- (c) Did the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or any SDS employee in any way encourage or advise the relevant senior minister, wardens, parish council, assistant minister or employee in the use of these deeds?
- (d) What was the nature of this encouragement or advice?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question is out of order under Synod Standing Order 6.3(4)(a) as it is framed by an assertion that the Archbishop is aware of 8 deeds (of release). This assertion is also false. The answer given on 17 September 2024 disclosed that the 8 deeds were known to the lawyers at SDS Legal, not the Archbishop.

- (a) This part of the question is also out of order under Synod Standing Order 6.3(4)(g) as it seeks a legal opinion. However, I am advised the answer is, no.
- (b) Yes. SDS staff were involved. The Archbishop's office was not.
- (c) Yes. SDS Legal advises parishes and the officeholders authorised to act on behalf of parishes, which is usually the Senior Minister and Wardens in relation to staffing matters. SDS Legal does not provide advice to officeholders or employees on matters that affect them personally.

The Archbishop's Office is involved from time to time in an effort to bring disputes to a conclusion acceptable to all parties.

- (d) SDS Legal cannot disclose the legal advice it provides to parishes. However, some general comments can be made about the role of deeds of release in resolving employment disputes.

A deed of release is a means of formally documenting the mutually agreed settlement of an employment dispute. Undertakings are given by the employer and employee, and each agrees that the dispute between them is at an end. This includes the employee accepting that the terms satisfy their claims and releasing the employer from the risk of further legal action.

If terms of settlement are not agreed, no deed is signed, the employee will receive their statutory and contractual entitlements, and the employee is free to pursue other avenues if they wish.

The use of deeds is not universally encouraged or advised by SDS Legal. It depends on the circumstances. This is evident in that there are no more than 8 known instances of their use in parishes over a 5-year period.

46. Proceedings under the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017*

The Rev Michael Doyle asked the following question –

Since the passing of the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017*:

- (a) How many Notices of Intention to Terminate are the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or SDS employees aware of?

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- (i) Were any given for reasons that included performance concerns? If so, how many?
- (ii) Have any been given for reasons that included the relevant assistant minister or employee making a claim that the parish is an unsafe workplace? If so, how many?
- (iii) Have any reviews been requested as allowed under section 3B of the Assistant Ministers Ordinance? If so, how many?
- (iv) What was the result of those reviews?
- (b) If any notices were given for reasons that included performance concerns:
 - (i) Were any preceded by a written performance plan? If so, how many?
 - (ii) Were any of the relevant assistant ministers or employees not previously given three written warnings that if their performance did not improve they would be terminated?
 - (iii) Did any result in the assistant minister resigning? If so, how many?
 - (iv) Did any result in the assistant minister being terminated? If so, how many?
 - (v) Did any result in performance being improved to an acceptable level? If so, how many?
- (c) Where the Archbishop's office (Archbishop, senior clergy, archdeacons or similar) or SDS employees have been involved in the process of the termination or performance management of employees or assistant ministers:
 - (i) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees acted on behalf of or request of the relevant senior minister in any instance? If so, in how many cases?
 - (ii) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees acted on behalf of or request of the relevant employee or assistant minister in any instance? If so, in how many cases?
 - (iii) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees attended meetings with the relevant employee or assistant minister at the request of the senior minister, or in the role of support person or representative for the senior minister? If so, in how many cases?
 - (iv) Have the Archbishop's office or SDS employees attended meetings with the employee or assistant minister at the request of the employee or assistant minister, or in the role of support person or representative for the employee or assistant minister? If so, in how many cases?
- (d) Since the employment by SDS of HR expertise:
 - (i) Have any employees or assistant ministers contacted SDS to ask for assistance? If so, how many have done so?
 - (ii) Has assistance been offered to any employee or assistant minister who has asked for it? If so, to how many?
 - (iii) Have there been any times that employees or assistant ministers have contacted the SDS and asked for help, and help was not provided? If so, for how many people is this the case?
 - (iv) If assistance by an employee or assistant minister was requested but was not offered or denied, why was it not offered or denied?
- (e) Noting Synod resolution 45/18 of the 2018 Synod, which "requests the Standing Committee to consider providing appropriate human resources expertise to support bishops, rectors, wardens and church staff", what human resource expertise has been provided to parish employees or assistant ministers?

To which the President replied –

I am informed the answer is as follows –

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There is no existing dataset from which to answer the parts of the question seeking numbers. The question asks concerning the awareness of a considerable number of people in the Archbishop's Office and SDS over a 7-year period. In addition, the information is held confidentially. Total numbers would require the Archbishop Office and SDS to share with each other the identities of the employees or assistant ministers concerned. It is not possible to provide an answer. The answers given are anecdotal and without numbers.

- (a) The number is not known.
- (i) Yes. The number is not known.
 - (ii) Yes, on one occasion. However, this answer is qualified by a wider context which is not appropriate to discuss in this forum.
 - (iii) No.
 - (iv) Not applicable.
- (b)
- (i) Yes. The number is not known.
 - (ii) Yes. The *Guidelines for termination of appointments under the Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017* issued by the Archbishop-in-Council do not set out a process involving three warnings. There is no expectation for a specific number of warnings to be given. It will depend on the circumstances.
 - (iii) Yes. The number is not known.
 - (iv) Yes. The number is not known.
 - (v) Yes. The number is not known.
- (c) The members of the Archbishop's Office involved in the processes under the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017* do not generally consider their role to involve acting on behalf of, representing or acting as a nominated support person for either Senior Ministers or Assistant Ministers. Most describe their role as to facilitate healthier conversation, to explain and provide direction on the process and provide pastoral care.

The following forms of support have been provided to Assistant Ministers by Bishops, the Archdeacons and their Assistants more specifically:

- Pastoral support and prayer;
- Discussions concerning the provision of counselling;
- Guidance on the Clergy Assistance Program, Stipend Continuance Insurance and the Sickness & Accident Fund;
- Assistance with 'next steps' if the matter proceeds to termination or resignation;
- An explanation of options for making complaints, including the *Diocesan Policy for dealing with allegations of unacceptable behaviour* and the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*;
- An explanation of the operation of the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017*;
- Guidance on support that may be available for a ministry spouse;
- On some occasions acting as a nominated support person by mutual agreement.

The SDS employees involved in such matters are the Parish HR Partner and the lawyers at SDS Legal. SDS employees do not act on behalf of Senior Ministers, or for any officeholders or employees on matters that affect them personally. They act for parishes. It is usually the Senior Minister and the Wardens who are authorised to provide instructions on behalf of parishes in respect to staffing matters due to their functions under the Ordinances of the Diocese.

On some occasions, the Parish HR Partner has acted as a support person for Senior Ministers where this has been considered helpful to facilitate a resolution to a contested HR matter. In these circumstances, the staff member involved would also have a support person present.

- (d)
- (i) Yes. The number is not known.
 - (ii) General assistance is usually provided by SDS employees where this is appropriate, but personal advice is not offered. Usually if SDS employees are contacted, they will suggest the person contact the Regional Bishop, his Assistant or, in appropriate cases, the Archdeacon for Women's Ministry.
 - (iii) Yes. The number is not known. Usually some form of general assistance would be provided, but not personal advice.
 - (iv) As stated in answers to other parts of the question, SDS employees assist parishes, not individual staff members in respect to matters that affect them personally.
- (e) The Parish HR Partner role commenced in January 2020 in response to the request in Synod resolution 45/18 to provide appropriate human resources expertise to support bishops, rectors, wardens and church staff. The potential scope of this task far exceeded what a single person could be expected to undertake in this role. Accordingly, in considering what constituted appropriate support in the circumstances, the SDS CEO decided that the role should initially focus on equipping parish rectors and wardens with the knowledge and resources they needed to appropriately manage clergy and other parish staff. In this way parish staff would be assisted – albeit indirectly. This focus at no time precluded assistant ministers and other parish staff seeking and receiving general advice from the Parish HR Partner. However, it became apparent that the inability of the Parish HR Partner to provide personal HR advice to parish staff, particularly in contested HR matters, left some feeling unsupported. In order to address this issue the Parish HR Partner's role has been repositioned to affirm that the Parish HR Partner is available to provide general advice to all parish staff and that, in the event of contested parish HR matters, the role will focus on ensuring that proper HR process and practice is followed for all parties concerned.

47. Donations made from the MDBA

The Rev David Clarke asked the following question –

With respect to the Circular of 2nd May 2024 sent by SDS on behalf of Standing Committee to Rectors, Wardens and Treasurers, 'Minister's Discretionary Benefits Accounts: Donating Funds from the MDBA':

- (a) Are there recent changes to taxation legislation that clergy and parishes should be aware of, since the distribution of the Guidelines for the Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff for 2024, that prompted these mid year changes to clergy remuneration packages?
- (b) From whom was professional tax advice sought on this matter?
- (c) Did Standing Committee see a copy of any professional advice given upon which it appears the Circular and advice was based?
- (d) In reaching the conclusion that 'Ministry staff should not request that tithes, offertories or any charitable donations be paid from their MDBA', were alternative definitions of 'expenses' considered by Standing Committee or any of its sub committees?
- (e) After sending out the circular, did the Standing Committee or any subcommittees receive the feedback given to SDS staff regarding:
 - (i) the potential impact on parish offertory and parish special projects by restricting how ministers may give to support their local church?
 - (ii) the potential impact on designated giving for missionaries, ministry trainees, Anglican Aid, SRE boards, child sponsorship and other donations where payments are made for a specific purpose or outcome?
- (f) As the circular states 'additional work continues to be undertaken', is there a time frame when clergy, wardens and treasurers will be given further clarity on these matters?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

The question is out of order under Synod Standing Orders 6.3(4)(a) and (g) as it contains assertions and seeks a legal opinion.

Nonetheless, I will make some comments.

The Standing Committee has declared its deliberations on this matter to be confidential to its members. I can say that the matter has been carefully considered by both the Standing Committee and its subcommittee on an informed basis, including by consulting experts in the relevant areas.

The substance of the feedback given to SDS staff in response to the circular was shared with the subcommittee.

The change does not generally have the impact asserted in the question.

The circular addresses two different matters. It does not say that additional work continues to be undertaken in relation to donating funds from an MDBA. The work on that matter is complete.

48. Aboriginal and Torres-Strait Islander-related results from the NCLS Survey

The Rev Andrew Barry asked the following question –

From the most recent NCLS Survey:

- (a) How many in total in the diocese identified in the NCLS category “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin”?
- (b) How many of those were in ministries led by Indigenous leadership? (raw number)
- (c) How many of those were in ministries led by non-Indigenous leadership? (raw number)
- (d) Which five churches had the largest numbers (not percentages) of those who identified in the NCLS category of being of “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin”?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) In the 2021 NCLS, there were 238 survey participants who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. It should be noted that the number of survey participants cannot be used as an estimate of the total number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attenders in the Diocese.
- (b) There are three Aboriginal churches in the Diocese which have unique NCLS code numbers that would enable their participation in the survey as separate entities: Shoalhaven Aboriginal Church, Nowra; Living Waters Community Fellowship, Redfern; and Macarthur Indigenous Church, Campbelltown. However, none of these churches participated in the 2021 NCLS and so none of the 238 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey participants can be linked to these three churches.

There may be other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries or groups meeting within parishes. However, where these exist, none have been identified as separate entities by the Diocese in the NCLS.

- (c) In light of the answer to part (b), it is very likely that virtually all 238 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attenders would be found in parish congregations led by non-Indigenous leadership. The 2021 NCLS Leader Survey found that, of 615 Sydney Anglican ministry staff who participated in the survey, only 1 identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

- (d) The table below shows the five churches with the largest numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey participants in the 2021 NCLS. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey participants were widely distributed across the parishes. Of the churches that took part in the survey, 131 had at least one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander survey participant.

Church Name	No. of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander NCLS 2021 participants
Rooty Hill Anglican	9
Menai Anglican	8
Glebe Anglican	5
Maroubra Anglican	5
Pitt Town Anglican	5

49. Anglican Reserve Chaplains in the Australian Defence Force

The Rev Trevor Young asked the following question –

- (a) How many of the clergy in the Diocese of Sydney are Anglican Reserve Chaplains in the Australian Defence Force?
- (b) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any:
- (i) are in the Army Reserve?
 - (ii) are in the Navy Reserve?
 - (iii) are in the Airforce Reserve?
- (c) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any:
- (i) are women?
 - (ii) are men?
- (d) Of the number in part (a), how many, if any:
- (i) are rectors of parishes, or curates-in-charge?
 - (ii) are deacons?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) 7.
- (b)
- (i) 3.
 - (ii) 3.
 - (iii) 1.
- (c)
- (i) 1.
 - (ii) 6.
- (d)
- (i) 2.
 - (ii) 2.

50. Attendance patterns analysis – relation between attendance and educational level

Mrs Lyn Miles asked the following question –

With regard to the analysis of attendance patterns across the diocese, is it possible to determine if there is any correlation at a regional level between decline in attendance and educational levels attained?

If so, what observations have been made?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

No. Information about educational levels is not collected at a regional level.

51. Preschools/Long Day Care centres

Mr Chris Hamam asked the following question –

- (a) Of all the Preschools/Long Day Care centres within our diocese:
 - (i) How many have a Christ Centred Constitution?
 - (ii) How many have a Christian Director?
 - (iii) How many have a Christ Centred Curriculum?
 - (iv) Total number existing or planned currently?
- (b) If answers to any of the above are not readily available, then how may this data be ascertained?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

There are no preschools or long day care centres under the control of the Synod. There are 38 preschools/centres that all operate as incorporated associations or companies limited by guarantee with a connection to the relevant parish, or as an arm's length tenant/licensee on church property.

Information relating to the constitution, whether there is a Christian director or Christ-centred curriculum is not readily available. Sydney Anglican Property is currently investigating the ministry effectiveness of preschools/centres and will upload results on its website when they become available (no later than Synod 2025).

In addition, many Diocesan and Anglican schools have a connection to the provision of early childhood education in their contexts.

52. SAP Consolidation Success Metrics

The Rev Mark Collins asked the following question –

Relating to the SAP Consolidation Success Metrics Attachment 3 (Bk 1 p. 161-162) –

- (a) Was consideration given to a measure which included the completion of major SAP building projects (i.e. those major building projects in ACPT, URPP and ACGC pipeline prior to the passing of motion 5) over 2024, 2025 and 2026?
- (b) What project dollar value does SAP consider as a major building project?
- (c) And if consideration was not given to a measure which included the completion of major SAP building projects, why not?

To which the President replied –

I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) The SAP consolidation metrics were developed by the Central Diocesan Structures Review Committee and approved by the Standing Committee to judge the success of the consolidation only, not the performance of the individual parts.

The existing strategic plans and key performance outcomes for each of the entities which were developed in 2023 by each entity for 2024 were carried forward under the management of SAP. (Anglican Church Growth Corporation published its plan 2023-25 which incorporates URPP).

SAP are currently preparing an SAP strategic plan that will incorporate detailed Key Performance Outcomes. This strategic plan is expected to be available on the SAP website during the last quarter of 2024.

- (b) SAP considers a major project as over \$500,000 (GST inclusive).
(c) No consideration was given to measuring SAP building projects as they were not directly impacted by the consolidation.

53. Leadership development data

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

Regarding leadership development programs such as 'CMD', 'City to City' or 'Reach Australia' –

- (a) Can the Synod be informed what data is being recorded to understand the impact on ministry development, church health or mission effectiveness within churches?
(b) What data or evidence is available to identify innovation in Gospel effectiveness?
(c) What data or evidence is available for improving outcomes of maturing disciples within these parishes?
(d) What data or evidence is available for a growth in newcomer rates?

To which the President replied –

It was not possible to answer this question in the time frame available. [The answer is still being prepared and will be emailed to the questioner when it is completed.]

An answer to this question was not able to be provided during the session and the question therefore lapsed.

54. Leadership development in parishes

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

Regarding leadership development within diocesan parishes:

- (a) What percentage of parishes have had rectors complete a two year leadership development course?
(b) What percentage of parishes have had rectors complete a one year leadership development course?
(c) Are there any known reasons for reservations from Rectors or Assistant Ministers undertaking leadership development programs as offered by 'CMD', 'City to City' or 'Reach Australia'?
(d) Is there a procedure to assist parishes wishing to undertake Ministry Development yet are unable to for economic or resourcing issues?

To which the President replied –

It was not possible to answer this question in the time frame available. [The answer is still being prepared and will be emailed to the questioner when it is completed.]

An answer to this question was not able to be provided during the session and the question therefore lapsed.

55. Centre for Ministry Development's Developing Rectors Program

The Rev David Lanham asked the following question –

- (a) How many parishes have participated in the Developing Rectors Program (**DRP**) led by the Centre for Ministry Development (**CMD**)?
- (b) How many rectors have undertaken the CMD DRP?
- (c) What data has been collected regarding the outcomes of the course?
- (d) What levels of numeric growth have been recorded in parishes who have undertaken the DRP?
- (e) What levels of Newcomers have been recorded in parishes who have undertaken the DRP?
- (f) What is the rate of course completion for rectors commencing the DRP?
- (g) What reasons are given from rectors who do not complete the 2 year DRP?

To which the President replied –

It was not possible to answer this question in the time frame available. [The answer is still being prepared and will be emailed to the questioner when it is completed.]

An answer to this question was not able to be provided during the session and the question therefore lapsed.