

## 10/16 Licensing of Incumbents Interim Report

(A second interim report from the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- While there are frustrations involved in clergy tenure when this is abused, it has contributed to unhampered preaching of the gospel which serves to maintain the strong evangelical heritage of our diocese. The appetite in the Diocese to change tenure and licensing is balanced by those who would oppose any significant change.
- More can be done to help clergy flourish by strengthening professional development and providing incentive to participate. Ministry Training & Development have developed a program to encourage Life Long Ministry Development.
- A career transition concept has been suggested that would help a small minority of rectors to voluntarily relinquish the office and transition out of their own accord to a more suitable role.
- Addressing the mental health and pastoral care of clergy in the Diocese has been assisted by the Clergy Assistance Program and the Clergy Contact Person Program
- Parish disputes can be avoided by encouraging healthy parish relationships and good practice for staff teams.
- The Committee invites members to provide feedback to the draft Healthy Parish Relationships document.
- Unreasonable and persistent failure to attend *Faithfulness in Service* and Safe Ministry training should be treated as misconduct.

### Purpose

1. The report notifies the Synod of progress concerning Synod Resolutions 9/15, 50/15, 51/15 and 10/16.

### Recommendations

2. The Synod receive this report
3. The Synod consider the following motion to be moved at the forthcoming session of the Synod in 2017 “by request of Standing Committee” –

‘Synod, noting the second interim Report of the Licensing of Incumbents Review Committee –

- (a) requests the Standing Committee to amend the *Ministry Training and Development Ordinance 1989* Objects to provide an approved accreditation system for clergy Professional Development,
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to amend the *Nomination Ordinance 2006* to include a mechanism requiring any nomination board to determine the Ministry Training and Development (MT&D) Professional Development Accreditation status for the person being nominated to the Archbishop for appointment as rector of the parish,
- (c) requests Standing Committee to amend the parish Prescribed Financial Statement to include an expense line for Professional Development and to ask the Stipends Allowances Committee to make a recommendation of an appropriate amount per clergy to be included in annual parish budgets for professional development.
- (d) endorses the concept of Negotiated Relinquishment of Incumbency as a mechanism to assist rectors who are choosing, or being encouraged to leave a parish, and requests Standing Committee to determine how it can be implemented and report to Synod in 2018,
- (e) notes the draft Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines, invites members to provide feedback to the Committee and endorses the Committee’s attention to this area,

- (f) requests the Standing Committee to bring a bill to the next Synod that would constitute as misconduct “unreasonable and persistent failure to attend the triennial *Faithfulness in Service* training” and “unreasonable and persistent failure to complete the triennial Safe Ministry training”.

4. The Synod consider the following motion to be moved at the forthcoming session of the Synod in 2017 “by request of Standing Committee” –

“Synod thanks the Pastoral Supervision Working Party and Rector Training Review Group for their work including in particular their promotion of professional development and reflective practice as imperative for the Diocese.”

### **Background**

5. At its session in 2015, Synod passed the following resolutions –

#### **9/15 Licensing of incumbents**

Synod requests Standing Committee, in consultation with the Archbishop, to report to the next session of Synod on –

- (a) the basis on which clergy are licensed as incumbents in the Diocese, and
- (b) whether there are circumstances where the present practice should be modified.

#### **50/15 Professional Pastoral Supervision for Clergy and Stipendiary Lay Ministers**

Synod –

- (a) recognises and gives thanks to God for the sacrificial and tireless efforts of our clergy and stipendiary lay ministers in parish ministry;
- (b) notes the need for all clergy and stipendiary lay ministers to debrief in a safe, stable and suitable supervisory space;
- (c) requests that the Standing Committee ask for a report from the Pastoral Supervision Working Group, and then review and report back to the Synod.

#### **51/15 Career Transition Management for Clergy and Stipendiary Lay Ministers**

Synod –

- (a) recognises and gives thanks to God for the sacrificial and tireless efforts of our clergy and stipendiary lay ministers in parish ministry;
- (b) requests that the Standing Committee establish a Working Group to explore ways of making it possible for those clergy and stipendiary lay ministers who need to transition from their parish ministry role to do so with honour and dignity, and report back to the Synod.

6. At its meeting on 16 November 2015 the Standing Committee requested that Bishop Peter Hayward, the Rev Philip Wheeler, the Rev Gavin Poole, the Rev Andrew Bruce and Dr Robert Tong bring a report to a future meeting of the Standing Committee addressing the matters in resolution 9/15. This group became known as the Licensing of Incumbents Review Committee (the “Committee”).

7. At its meeting on 25 July 2016, the Standing Committee encouraged the Committee to liaise with the Pastoral Supervision Working Party and the Rector Training Review Group.

8. At its meeting on 19 September 2016, the Standing Committee agreed that the terms of reference of the Committee be expanded as follows –

- (a) to confirm that the work of the group in response to Synod resolution 9/15 extends beyond the licensing of incumbents to include the licensing of clergy generally,
- (b) to ask that the group undertake the work requested by the Synod in relation to career transition management for clergy and stipendiary lay workers (resolution 51/15), and
- (c) to ask that the group generally coordinate the development of proposals relating to or arising from the licensing of clergy (resolution 9/15), pastoral supervision for clergy and stipendiary lay ministers (resolution 50/15) and career transition management for clergy and stipendiary lay ministers (resolution 51/15),

and agreed that the Archdeacon of Women’s Ministry and the Director of Ministry Training and Development be added as members of the group and that the group also be given the power to co-opt.

9. An interim report prepared by the Committee was circulated to Synod in 2016. The Committee reported that the basis on which clergy were licensed was –

- on the authority of a diocesan bishop which, in Sydney, is the Archbishop,
- open to candidates meeting various minimum qualifications,
- to ‘a title’, that is, to a specified ministry position,
- for rectors, until retirement in accordance with the *Retirements Ordinance 1993*,
- for assistant ministers, subject to the terms of their appointment, and
- subject to the licence not having been relinquished, suspended or revoked in accordance with relevant ordinances, or pursuant to a judgement of the tribunal or other relevant court.

10. The Committee also identified five possible areas or reasons why modification or adjustment to the present practice might be warranted, but did not draw a final conclusion as to the circumstances in which the present practice should be modified.

11. The Committee noted the following possible recommendations –

- (a) that a Professional Development program be developed using the available resources and structures of MT&D and Moore College and that responsibility for developing materials and resources and the overall program be given to the Synod appointed committee looking at rector training,
- (b) that a mechanism be developed to allow the Archbishop in conjunction with the parish leadership to be able to offer a minister an ‘exit strategy’ that enables them to retrain and return to secular work, and,
- (c) that an annual/regular ‘mental health check-up and debrief’ with a qualified counsellor or psychologist be required for all ministers as part of the professional development program.

12. At its session in October 2016 Synod (resolution 10/16) –

- (a) welcomed the interim report on Licensing of Incumbents,
- (b) encouraged the Committee to continue to meet and provide a final report with recommendations and proposed ordinances for consideration by the Synod in 2017,
- (c) noted that the survey mentioned in the report will be sent to Synod members shortly and invited members to complete the survey, and
- (d) invited Synod members to provide feedback on the interim report to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2016 for consideration by the Committee.

13. The Committee was also mindful that in 2016 Synod passed the following resolution –

**9/16 Equipping rectors for their task of leadership**

Synod gives thanks to God for the well trained men who lead our parishes and recognising that –

- (a) rectors are charged with the leadership of our parishes, and
- (b) many could be even better prepared and even better resourced for this task,

Synod asks the Strategic Research Group to establish a committee (in consultation with MT&D, CMD and other appropriate instruments) to explore and report back to the Synod in 2017 on what action is required and how it may be implemented to better equip rectors for their task of leadership.

14. The Committee comprises the Rev Andrew Bruce, Bishop Peter Hayward, the Rev Gavin Poole, Dr Robert Tong AM, the Rev Philip Wheeler, MT&D Director, the Rev Gary O’Brien and Archdeacon for Women’s Ministry, the Ven Kara Hartley. At its meeting on 20 March 2017, in order to facilitate liaison with the Rector Training Review Group, the Committee co-opted Mr Peter Mayrick, Co-Director with the Centre for Ministry Development, as an additional member of the Committee.

15. The Committee has retained its original title even though its brief was extended to include the licensing of clergy generally and broadened beyond licensing.

**Work of the Committee**

16. The Committee met a further seven times following Synod 2016 and undertook the following activities –

- (a) liaised with the Pastoral Supervision Working Party by receiving a presentation from representatives of that group and reviewing its report,
- (b) liaised with the Rector Training and Review Group by receiving and evaluating a professional development proposal from the group and co-opting Mr Peter Mayrick from the group to the Committee,
- (c) received and evaluated feedback from Synod members,
- (d) received and analysed the results of a survey of Synod members,
- (e) reviewed the options for modifying the licence arrangements of clergy,
- (f) received and evaluated a professional development proposal prepared by Ministry, Training & Development, and
- (g) developed with SDS a proposal for career transition and exit from ministry.

17. The Committee undertook a survey of Synod members, 'Incumbency in Sydney', and 319 Synod members both lay and clergy responded. This represents about 40% of Synod members (807). Of the approximately 270 possible rectors in the Diocese, 127 completed the survey representing just under 50% of rectors. The Committee was encouraged by Synod's high response rate and this enabled the Committee to gauge shortcomings with the existing system, to identify areas that need addressing and dampen anxiety about the current system.

18. The purpose was to provide some quantitative data, rather than anecdotes, on issues such as incumbent rectors staying too long, levels of mental illness among clergy, support for changes to licensing, attitudes to professional development and whether there is adequate support for clergy in their roles. The data has been used in focusing the work of the Committee and supports the various recommendations.

19. A brief summary page 'Incumbency at a Glance' is provided in Appendix 1. Essentially the survey reveals the following observations.

- (a) There is not a strong view from either clergy or lay members that their rector should move on. Only 13% of rectors indicated they would move on if they could. About the same percentage of lay representatives thought their rector should move on.
- (b) There was support for the view that while their church is supportive of the rector in his role, approximately half of the rectors believed that they were being adequately cared for in their work.
- (c) There was a strong view (88% of respondents) that if rectors were not performing, a better way is needed to help them move on. At the same time 35% of respondents agreed that a change was needed to licensing and tenure while 29% disagreed that a change was warranted.
- (d) While about a third of rectors have some sort of coaching or mentoring in place to help them develop only half the parishes had any allocation in their budgets for professional development of their staff.
- (e) While 11% of rectors reported struggling with depression and 16% with anxiety these figures are not appreciably higher than the general population (12% of Australian males will struggle with depression at some stage of their life) and therefore the contention that levels of depression, anxiety and burn out are very high among our clergy does not appear to be supported by the survey evidence.

20. The full survey results are available to Synod members on the [Synod this year page](#) of the SDS website, [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au), along with two detailed analyses (one developed by members of the Committee and the other by Mr John Bellamy, Senior Researcher with Anglicare, who helpfully extracted additional information from the data set) on the SDS website as part of the Synod papers.

21. The survey could be summed up by the following remark that was made by a rector in the comments field –

*I want to ensure that those rectors who are thriving, and those who are faithfully pushing through change, have security in their positions to be entrepreneurs and make tough decisions. (At the same time) I am keen to see those rectors who are 'treading water', doing nothing, and the church is declining, have the ability to be moved on or helped into another area of ministry.*

22. The Committee's reading of the survey is that while there is not significant support to change clergy tenure, there is a desire to help rectors flourish, strengthen professional development and provide ways of helping a small minority of rectors to transition out of incumbency to either another ministry role or to the secular work force.

23. In addition to the survey the Committee received detailed feedback and comments from a number of Synod and Standing Committee members and we appreciated the comments made and have sought to accommodate or act on those suggestions or comments where possible.

24. The Committee focused its work in five main areas –

- (a) licensing and whether any change to licence or tenure might be recommended,
- (b) Professional Development for all clergy drawing together the work of several other committees and working groups,
- (c) pastoral care and ways to better support all clergy,
- (d) creation of good practice guidelines for healthy parish relationships (rector and parish, rector and ministry team), and
- (e) career transition and developing a workable exit mechanism.

### **Licensing and the legal context (9/15)**

25. The Parish Administration Ordinance requires all persons who preach and conduct services to be licensed and approved by the Archbishop. This is governed by a number of Ordinances. The *Anglican Church of Australia Constitution Act 1902* allows a licence to be suspended or revoked but only in accordance with a Synod ordinance and/or via a tribunal. In short, the Archbishop grants licences, but Synod through its Ordinances determines how they may be suspended or revoked.

26. This however does not stop the Archbishop granting licences with limited tenure, or validity for the term of appointment to a parish (as is the case for Assistant Ministers).

27. The concept of tenure has its origin with the Church of England Parson's Freehold, which secured a lifelong benefice for the purpose of the rector or vicar. This was designed to provide an ongoing benefice to clergy and encourage unhampered preaching of the gospel. Although freehold predates the Reformation, it enabled reformation ministry that was distinguished from the magisterium that characterised the Roman Catholic Church. On the one hand, this led to abuses such as that committed by the Rev Edward Drax Free, who was appointed Vicar of All Saints, Sutton, Bedfordshire in 1808. He was accused of irregularity of his services, the scurrility of his sermons, swearing, excessive drinking, removing lead from the church roof, and uprooting gravestones in the churchyard. He was finally removed by the House of Lords in 1830 which led to law reform in the Church of England. On the other hand, freehold provided for rectors who were unpopular choices and enabled them to continue their ministry even in the face of opposition (R.B Outhwaite, *Scandal in the church; Dr Edward Drax Free, 1764 – 1843* (London: Hambledon Press, 1977).

28. Freehold has been called into question on numerous occasions and attempts made to modify the law to enable the removal of a clergyman from a benefice in the interest of the parish. During one such debate, a church historian warned against removing freehold and being left with, 'A poorly paid employee; with no security of tenure, desperately striving to serve two masters: his ecclesiastical superiors and his lay parishioners; and satisfying neither of them.' (A.T. Hart, 'The Parson's Freehold', *The Churchman*, Vol 80 (1966)).

29. In England freehold has been recently superseded by the Church of England Common Tenure for all new licences, which confers powers on diocesan Bishops to instigate capability procedures on grounds of non-performance and to make fixed term appointments in limited circumstances.

30. The Committee considered the culture of our Diocese where incumbency is well entrenched and considered an important aspect of Sydney distinctiveness which places emphasis on the local church and the unhampered preaching of the gospel. In the view of some it is tenure that has helped guard the evangelical heritage of the Diocese and any change to the basis of licensing would be a threat to this evangelical heritage.

31. The Committee is therefore not proposing any significant change to licensing of incumbents. It has, however, identified at least one minor change that might be beneficial for all clergy pertaining to *Faithfulness in Service* and Safe Ministry and can anticipate a possible future change to licensing pertaining to professional development once the culture of life long ministry development is more embedded.

32. Given the importance of ensuring safe ministry in our parishes and the expectation that all clergy will understand and abide by the standards set out in *Faithfulness in Service*, the Archbishop requires that every person holding a licence must attend the triennial one day training program in *Faithfulness in Service* and ensure they are compliant with Safe Ministry standards (refresher training at least every three years). However non-attendance and failure to comply with these minimum standards agreed upon by Synod has no mechanism of enforcement. A member of clergy could simply refuse to attend despite being spoken to by their regional bishop or the Archbishop. The Committee was of the view that this serious breach of expected standards ought to warrant at least a review of the licence. This could be achieved by way of an

adjustment to what constitutes an offence in this Diocese under the Discipline Ordinance or by way of an ordinance such as was agreed by Synod recently concerning clergy obtaining a Working With Children Check.

33. The Committee wants to see professional development and life-long ministry training become normative in the Diocese. While many clergy are already voluntarily participating in some form of professional development, the current culture is not universal and an accreditation system would add incentive and shape to the culture in the Diocese. A concern is that those clergy who would most benefit from a more rigorous and accountable professional development program are possibly those who are less likely to voluntarily pursue it. Incentives to participate were canvased such as encouraging parish nominators to clarify whether a prospective candidate for a parish vacancy had engaged in ongoing professional development and discouraging appointment of candidates who have shown no willingness to develop. A certificate of currency could be supplied from MT&D.

34. As a culture of lifelong ministry training develops in the Diocese it is foreseeable that strengthening of the program might be considered in the future with the addition of –

- (a) a performance review process at agreed key stages in ministry (after 10 years, 15 years, 20 year mark) utilising tools such as 360 degree reviews and consultation with the person, their parish and the Diocese,
- (b) a review of licence, with the potential for removal where an incumbent persistently and unreasonably refuses to engage in professional development.

35. The Committee therefore recommends that –

- (a) the **Nomination Ordinance** be amended by the Standing Committee to include a mechanism requiring any nomination board to determine the MT&D Professional Development Accreditation status for the person being nominated to the Archbishop for appointment as rector of the parish,
- (b) a bill be brought to the next Synod that would constitute as misconduct “unreasonable and persistent failure to attend triennial *Faithfulness in Service* training or to complete the triennial Safe Ministry training”, and
- (c) a line item for Professional Development be added to the parish **Prescribed Financial Statements**.

### **Professional Development (10/16)**

36. The first Report from this Committee in 2016 identified the need to develop a culture of professional development within the Diocese. We identified that there was very little by way of formal professional development beyond the initial training at theological college and the first three years out of college with the MT&D program. This situation is well below what most other professional people in our society have (doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, psychologist etc) and well below the expectations and assumptions of lay people who are regularly surprised by the lack of any professional development requirements for their ministers.

37. While the survey has revealed that many ministers do have some form of on-going professional development (50%), this was not universal, consistently embraced over the life of a minister, or necessarily focused on developing the competencies ministers needed. Programs vary in style from specific coaching and training in ministry skills, ongoing theological training via masters or higher degrees, accountability groups seeking to support ministers in their work or simply ministers undertaking their own reading programs and courses.

38. It was felt that this culture ought to be developed even further and MT&D was asked to develop a plan for ‘life-long ministry development’. Several other groups were working simultaneously on related areas and the Committee received reports from the Rector Training Review Group (commissioned by the Strategic Research Group, see Appendix 3) and the Pastoral Supervision Working Group (see an executive summary at Appendix 4).

39. A detailed proposal for ‘Life Long Ministry Development’ has been developed by MT&D after review of the various reports and extensive consultation. The details of the proposal and the benefits are contained in a separate motion before Synod.

40. The Committee endorses the MT&D proposal for lifelong ministry development and recommends –

- (a) MT&D be encouraged to pursue completion of the LMD website, including the Ministry Development Plan template and certificate of LMD currency,
- (b) all licensed ministry personnel be encouraged to register for LMD recognition,

- (c) the Archbishop be requested to communicate the benefit of professional development to rectors and Wardens encouraging them to financially support their rector's development,
- (d) prescribed annual financial statements include a professional development line item,
- (e) registration and continued MT&D recognition be included as licence conditions for all future rectors, and
- (f) a commitment to professional development be included in the Archbishop's letter of offer to all new rectors and parishes be encouraged to ensure their new rector attends the Developing Rector Program.

### **Pastoral Care and Mental Health of Clergy**

41. In April 2016 the Archbishop launched the Clergy Assistance Program ("CAP") which offers a program of professional confidential Christian counselling, together with support from other mental health professionals where required, for clergy licensed in the Diocese. A small addition charge was added to PCR to cover the cost of this scheme. Standing Committee have received two reports on the operation of the scheme and outcomes. A report on the first year of operation of the scheme is contained in the Synod papers for 2017. The scheme has been accessed by 63 parish clergy and feedback has been very positive.

42. In addition to the CAP initiative the Diocese has recently added the Clergy Contact Person ("CCP") program which provides a list of contact persons that clergy and their spouses can call when they are facing heightened levels of stress and difficulty associated with parish ministry. The contact person will arrange a face-to-face meeting to discuss the options available to them including accessing peer support groups, mentoring/coaching and professional development programs, and (via the Clergy Assistance Program) counselling and other mental health support. For clergy who are unable to work due to poor health, the program also includes assistance in making stipend continuance insurance claims. The contact persons are well equipped to assist in both explaining and accessing these options. The CCP program is still in its infancy but once sufficient history is available the program will be reviewed as to its effectiveness and usefulness.

43. The Committee commends the Diocese for these initiatives as ways to improve support for clergy and help address pastoral care and mental health needs of clergy. The PSWG especially highlighted the need to improve pastoral support and provide structures by which clergy can de brief and deal with the pressures of ministry and impact of dealing with complex pastoral situations.

### **Healthy Parish Relationships**

44. Over the course of the Committee's work we became aware of the need for guidelines to help manage staff relationships and the relationship of the rector to the parish. There are various pieces of legislation that govern these relationships however it was felt that 'good practice' guidelines would be more useful to develop healthy relationships. Managing expectations and clear communication between parties helps minimise problems.

45. The Committee were aware of the work of SDS in this regard with an extensive document available on the SDS website entitled 'Employment Relations Guidelines for Parishes'. However it would seem this is not widely accessed by parishes and therefore it was thought that simpler practical Guidelines be developed. These guidelines would set out what 'good practice' is to achieve healthy parish relationships with the rector and staff and the lay leadership of a parish. These would include practical things such as –

- letters of appointment,
- templates for job descriptions for staff,
- templates for staff reviews,
- best practice termination guidelines should a termination of a staff member be contemplated etc.

46. Appendix 2 contains an early exposure draft of the Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines. The Committee invites feedback and comments from Synod members about its value and the contents.

### **Career Transition Management (51/15)**

47. By its resolution on 19 September 2016 Standing Committee made the Committee responsible for undertaking the work requested by the Synod in relation to career transition management for clergy and stipendiary lay workers (resolution 51/15). Specifically, this entailed exploring 'ways of making it possible for those clergy and stipendiary lay ministers who need to transition from their parish ministry role to do so with honour and dignity.' The Committee confined its consideration to incumbents for this report.

*Introduction*

48. There are circumstances where resignation from an incumbency may be the appropriate decision for a minister to take. For example –

- (a) the minister's health or the health of their immediate family or close relations,
- (b) immediate family in need of significant additional attention, or
- (c) inadequate skills to continue as incumbent of a parish.

*Obstacles to transition from incumbency*

49. In our interim report, we observed five circumstances where modification to the present practice of licensing might be warranted: those of pastoral breakdown, incapacity, unsuitability, staying too long and congestion (unavailability of alternative roles). Incumbents in these circumstances may not feel able to resign and transition to alternative employment because there are genuine obstacles to exiting parish ministry.

50. The Committee identifies obstacles including –

- (a) an authentic heart for the gospel, for his people and for his work, meaning that an incumbent would prefer parish ministry to any other kind of work and is reluctant to leave,
- (b) for some a strong sense of 'calling' to the office and belief that ordination is 'for life' and so resignation is seen as a failure or even wrong,
- (c) the enormous life change involved due to the combination of years of service in the role, residential arrangements, social network and children's education being tied to the minister's vocational office,
- (d) for many the professional qualifications held by the incumbent prior to ordination may have expired, so that re-training may be required and involve a significant investment of time and/or money,
- (e) the incumbent's remuneration package is sufficiently comfortable, life-encompassing and for some, in excess of what they may be able to attract in the labour market, and
- (f) fringe benefits offered as part of the remuneration includes a significant discount to tuition fees at Anglican schools and this discount may no longer be available should the incumbent transition from parish ministry.

*Ministry Re-deployment*

51. Unsuitability for continued incumbency ministry in many circumstances does not mean that a person is unsuitable for other ministry roles. Positions of assistant minister, school or Anglicare chaplain, theological educator, missionary service or service with para-church ministries are options as alternatives to the secular workforce.

52. The Diocese ought to value any person who has offered their vocational gifts to the ministry of gospel proclamation, Bible teaching and prayer, and who, in partnership with the Diocese, has invested in being equipped for gospel ministry. Redeployment within ministry is preferable if at all possible.

*Negotiated Relinquishment of Incumbency*

53. Where it becomes apparent that an incumbent is not able to fulfil his ministry, there should be conversations between the incumbent, the parish wardens and the regional bishop to consider if a voluntary relinquishment of incumbency is appropriate.

54. In our view, the terms of any negotiated relinquishment ought to include a payment (akin to a redundancy payment offered in the secular workforce) to make transitioning out of incumbency a realistic possibility.

55. Components of a secular termination payment commonly include –

- (a) statutory entitlements including annual and long service leave owing,
- (b) payment in lieu of notice (including allowances),
- (c) redundancy (up to 12 weeks),
- (d) an additional separation payment (in return for relinquishing any right to further legal claims), and
- (e) provision of an out-placement service.

56. A relinquishment package for an incumbent could therefore include –

- (a) entitlements including annual and long service leave owing,



- (b) a 'relinquishment' payment to assist in re-training and redeployment,
- (c) permitting the incumbent and family to remain in a parish residence for an agreed period (for example up to six months, at minimal or no rent) while the parish searches for a new incumbent and to provide stability for the family,
- (d) Anglican schools may be asked to continue to provide a clergy discount to the incumbent for an agreed period,
- (e) continued access to the Diocesan Clergy Assistance Program, and
- (f) provision of an out-placement service.

57. For the purpose of this discussion, a termination/relinquishment payment might be determined as follows –

- assuming 26 weeks in an average case, and using a "minimum stipend" of \$65,000 per annum, a termination payment might be in the order of \$32,500
- allowances regularly reimbursed out of the ministers MEA ought also to be paid for this period (housing allowance, travel, hospitality, book allowance, etc). At a minimum this would include the motor vehicle allowance of approximately \$6,000 for 26 weeks
- any payments made by the parish (non-MEA) should also be calculated for the period (phone, ISP expenses, etc)
- out-placement service, \$8,000.

58. Accordingly, the relinquishment/termination payment might be in the order of \$50,000. There may be parishes where the amount is higher or lower depending on circumstances. For example where the incumbent is relinquishing for reasons of their own or a close family member ill health consideration might be given for increased payment to assist in meeting medical expenses.

*Who should pay the termination payment?*

59. There are a number of possibilities for the source of payment –

- (a) the parish in full,
- (b) the parish and the Synod in defined proportions, or
- (c) the Synod.

60. Parishes will vary in their capacity to make a relinquishment/termination payment. For some, it will only be possible if funds external to the parish can be drawn upon. For others, a Synod fund could be used to supplement parish contributions. Such a fund could be seeded by an additional PCR charge.

61. From discussions with the regional bishops it is anticipated that there might be a total of 1 or 2 such transitions of incumbents in each region in any year (estimated 5-8 across the Diocese). The total financial cost of the negotiated relinquishments might be between \$250,000 and \$400,000 each year. If this cost was carried in a 50/50 split in most instances with the parishes and the Synod, the cost to the Diocese from Synod funds might be as little as \$125,000.

62. The Committee notes that funds were available in previous years through the Clergy Mobility Fund and available at the discretion of the Archbishop for the purpose of assisting an incumbent to transition out of ministry. There are still funds held by the Diocese available at the discretion of the Archbishop-in-council.

63. In order to keep the scheme operating for future years amount available in the Synod Fund for negotiated relinquishments would need to be topped up. A small additional charge could be made in the PCR for each incumbent to replenish the Fund.

64. The Committee believes this proactive approach will over-time reduce costs associated with the incumbents staying in office in circumstances where for their wellbeing or the parishes it would be better if they relinquished the office.

65. Accordingly, it is recommended that Synod endorse the concept of a 'negotiated relinquishment of incumbency', and requests Standing Committee to determine how it is to be implemented.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee

PHILIP WHEELER

*Chair, Subcommittee of Standing Committee*

31 August 2017

## Incumbency at a glance

319 members of the 2016 Anglican Diocese of Sydney Synod including 127 rectors participated in an online survey that raised issues regarding the licensing of rectors. This represents just on 33% of all possible Synod members and just under 50% of rectors in the Diocese. Thanks to the large response, the survey produced some of the most comprehensive research on this issue in the Sydney Diocese.

You will find detailed reports available to Synod members on the [Synod this year page](#) of the SDS website, [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au).

This short synopsis compares some anecdotal claims to the research.

### Time to move on?

**Assertion:** 'There are many rectors who should have moved on but are digging their heels in.'

**Findings:** Unsupported

When lay respondents were asked whether they believe that it is 'time for their rector to move on' more disagreed (77%) than those who agreed (14%). The clear majority of respondents are happy with their current rector. The majority (92%) of rectors believe they are well suited to their positions.

### Older rectors

**Assertion:** 'Older rectors are 'treading water' until retirement.'

**Findings:** Unsupported, with qualification

Lay respondents are more likely to agree that their rector should move on where the rector has been in the position for longer than 10 years (24%). Given that rectors who have been in the position for a longer time period are also more likely to be older, the association with age may simply be a surrogate of length of time in the position.

### Licensing

**Assertion:** 'There is strong support to change the typical rector's licence.'

**Findings:** Unsupported, with qualification

The number of respondents who support change to licensing (35%) is roughly equivalent to those who do not support change (29%). However, a large majority of respondents (88%) believe that there needs to be a better way to help rectors into different roles if they are not performing.

### Mental Illness

**Assertion:** 'Mental illness is prolific among rectors.'

**Findings:** Unsupported, with qualification

11% of rectors indicated that they significantly struggle with depression. This compares to 12% of Australian men who will struggle with depression at some stage of their life (Beyond Blue). While 16% of rectors indicated that they significantly struggle with anxiety. This compares to 20% of Australian men who will experience anxiety (Beyond Blue).

Mental illness is a societal issue and not unique to clergy. We will want to care for those who suffer and ensure they flourish despite their illness. This requires a supportive community. The Diocese has initiated a Clergy Assistance Program to help improve the care of clergy facing mental health issues.

### 'Stuck in their roles'

**Assertion:** 'Many rectors are 'stuck' in their roles and need to be assisted into other roles.'

**Findings:** Unsupported, with qualification

The majority of rectors (92%) believe they are well suited to their role. A minority (13%) would move if they could. There is no evidence to suggest that this is significantly higher than many other professions.

### Professional Development

**Assertion:** 'There is little by way of ongoing Professional Development for rectors'

**Findings:** Unsupported

Almost all rectors claim to participate in Professional Development however these were varied and there are not currently any formal requirements as other professions have. Over a third of rectors have either a mentor or coach. If reasonable informal requirements were introduced it is not likely to consume much more time than rectors are already devoting to their development and training. Notwithstanding the current participation rates most would agree our culture of professional development needs improvement and universal application.

### **Support**

**Assertion:** 'There should be more done to support our rectors.'

**Findings:** Supported, with qualification

51% of Rectors believe that they are adequately cared for. 42% of respondents do not believe that rectors are looked after in a way that gives them the best opportunity to improve and grow over time.

46% of churches reported that nothing is budgeted for professional development while 21% reported to spend more than \$1000 per full-time staff person. This strengthens to proposal for professional development from MT and D.

### **Support Networks**

**Assertion:** 'rectors who have support networks perform better and are more energised.'

**Findings:** Supported

The percentage of rectors who indicated they felt energetic or very energetic climbed from 61% where there was no support to 69% where the rector reported only one professional development personal relationship to 78% where there were two or more supportive relationship.

## Healthy Parish Relationships Guidelines

### 1. Preamble

Church leadership is an indispensable part of Christ's body. Men and women are gifts to the church to, "... prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God ..." (Ephesians 4:12-13).

When the church's leadership and people work together, under the authority of Christ, the church flourishes and provides the best environment for gospel growth.

On the one hand, the people are to, "...respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you." (1 Thessalonians 5:12). On the other hand, leaders are not to lord over them and, "... whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant ..." (Mark 10:43). Servant leadership is the way of the Son of Man who, "... did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45).

In all our relationships, grace and love must prevail but particularly when it comes to ministers' relationships with each other and the church.

A proper understanding of expectations goes a long way toward healthy parish relationships. This document is designed to assist churches and ministers to work together. It focuses on the relationships of a) rector to the church and b) rector to other staff.

The Parish Council of each church may move something like the following motion at the beginning of each ministry appointment.

"The Minister, Wardens and Parish Council: –

- (a) give thanks for God's gifts to the church and strive to live at peace for the sake of the gospel;
- (b) agree to the church's amended version of the Sydney Diocese's, "Healthy Parish Relationship Guidelines" and;
- (c) agree to pray for those whom the Lord has given to provide leadership, teaching and pastoral support."

### 2. Other relevant documentation

We strive to relate to each other by grace and not by law. That said, the law is often based on good principles and knowing the law can actually lead to mutual understanding and hence better relationships.

These guidelines act as an omnibus document to help church workers through the maze of legislation. It is intended to work alongside existing legislation.

Listed here are some of the relevant documents that govern the way we relate in the church.

#### 2.1. Anglican Diocese of Sydney, Employment Relations, Guidelines for Parishes

A very useful document which provides employment guidelines for all parish workers including employees, independent contractors, voluntary workers and Ministers/Assistant Ministers.

#### 2.2 Remuneration guidelines

Remuneration guidelines for Parish Ministry Staff are published by the Secretariat on an annual basis.

#### 2.3 Ordinances

##### 2.3.1 Anglican Church of Australia Constitutions Act 1902, Clause 3(4) of the schedule

A part of an Act of the New South Wales Parliament which allows the Synod of each diocese to determine by ordinance the circumstances in which a clergy licence may be suspended or revoked.

**2.3.2 Parish Administration Ordinance**

Requires any person who preaches and conducts services to be licensed or approved by the Archbishop or regional Bishop.

**2.3.3 Nomination Ordinance**

Outlines the procedure for forming a nomination committee and making recommendations to the Archbishop.

**2.3.4 Parental Leave Ordinance**

Outlines parental leave entitlement for clergy.

**2.3.5 Assistant Ministers Ordinance**

Outlines the procedures for appointing an Assistant Minister and how that arrangement may be terminated.

**2.3.6 Parish Disputes Ordinance**

Can be used by Parish Council in cases of dispute involving a church worker, which may involve mediation.

**2.3.7 Parish Relationships Ordinance**

If a 65% majority of a Parish General Meeting determines that there is a relationship breakdown between the minister and parishioners, in certain circumstances, a licence review process may be invoked.

**2.4 Statutory law**

Stipendiary lay workers will be subject to various Commonwealth and New South Wales employment laws. Although these do not always directly apply to licensed clergy, they should be referred to.

**2.5 The Ordinal, Book of Common Prayer**

Clergy make important promises at their ordination. Anglicans take these very seriously and in some jurisdictions may even be legally binding.

**3. Church relationship with staff****3.1 Rector****3.1.1 Employment status**

The rector is considered an officeholder rather than an employee. He is licensed to a parish by the Archbishop of Sydney.

This is an unusual employment status and doesn't directly correspond with other secular employment arrangements. Clergy licensing is governed by Synod, and its various ordinances.

Since the Minister is regarded as an officeholder, the Sydney Diocese Employment Relations Guidelines recommends that care be taken not to enter into an employment contract.

**3.1.2 Nomination process**

The nomination process is governed by the *Nomination Ordinance 2006*, can be onerous but involves representatives from the parish, Synod and the Archbishop. It is worth doing well in order to find the right candidate for the right church.

Once a rector is nominated, there is no going back. It can be difficult to remove a rector, therefore choose wisely.

The church elects five nominators at its general meeting every year. These people should be godly, well known and likely to act in the church's interest. Most years the nominators will be inactive however careful thought and prayer should be applied every year as though they will become active.

Nominators should have a clear idea of the type of minister that the church needs. They should have ongoing discussions with the Wardens.

An important question is whether the church needs a culture change for the sake of the gospel or ongoing improvement to the current culture. Nominators should seek a candidate who will lead such change/improvement.

Nominators will commonly filter all available clergy to come up with a preferred list. It is important to be realistic and to pick clergy who may be in a position to move.

Narrowing down the preferred list will involve speaking to referees, relevant people (like the bishops) listening to recorded sermons and attending their current church (bearing in mind the sensitivity for that church).

The nominators should interview the candidates more than once and should work hard to explain the uniqueness of their church and understand the candidates' strengths, weaknesses and characters, to determine a good fit. It is important to get beyond initial niceties. The nominators should consider the candidates they are pursuing and imagine the potential areas of conflict. This may direct their discussion with the candidates.

The candidates should make a careful study of the church profile along with other research. They should communicate clearly to the nominators any significant cultural change that they believe may need to take place. It is disingenuous to surprise the nominators once in the position.

Seeking God's wisdom in prayer should undergird the nomination process at every step.

### **3.1.3 Rector's responsibilities**

Rather than a "job description" it would be appropriate to come to an advance agreement of the rector's responsibilities. These should be phrased in terms of ministry outcomes, rather than specific duties. For example, it is better to state, "The rector will be responsible for the pastoral care of church members" rather than, "The rector will visit sick church members on a frequent basis."

Schedule 1 of the Parish Administration Ordinance states, 'The minister has general responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the parish and each church in the parish and for this purpose has powers, rights and duties in accordance with his licence and authority from the Archbishop'.

The agreement should not contradict or repeat that already stated in the Parish Administration ordinance. However, it may include agreement as to how this is practised within the uniqueness of a particular church.

According to schedule 1 of the Parish Administration Ordinance, the main financial function of the Wardens are, 'to ensure the proper management, security and financial administration of all money and other property of the church (except money or other property for which the Wardens are excluded from exercising this function by the trusts on which such money or other property is held)'. They may also appoint certain paid workers, with the concurrence of the minister. The rector determines the duties performed by ministry staff.

Wardens are also responsible to keep order of each church property and grounds.

Put simply, the rector is responsible for the 'spiritual welfare' of the church and the Wardens and parish council for 'temporal matters'. In reality it is not quite that simple. The temporal matters can be managed in a way that facilitates the spiritual welfare of the church, so it is important for the rector and Wardens to work closely together. The rector should consult the Wardens and parish council on matters regarding spiritual welfare and vice versa. If the two do not work well together, disagreement and discord can easily result. The rector should meet with Wardens at least monthly, in addition to a monthly parish council meeting.

### **3.1.4 Rector's entitlements**

A rector should have access to normal entitlements however, given the uniqueness of his position, flexibility is required. For example, a rector may need to perform ministry duties during public holidays. He is responsible for his own time management, ensuring that he has sufficient rest with minimal disruption to the church. It is not appropriate for a minister to accrue leave in lieu of unused public holidays.

A church can encourage professional development by budgeting for it. Such a budget may include locum payments for study leave.

A rector should give ample notice for leave. He may negotiate with the Wardens additional study leave when it is considered to benefit the rector and the church.

It is important that current Wardens understand and respect agreements made between the rector and previous Wardens. Wardens often change and it can be frustrating for the rector to have to remind, educate and sometimes renegotiate agreements made in the past. If conditions have changed, Wardens may want to renegotiate an agreement with the rector. It is not acceptable to simply ignore a previous agreement. Eg. 10 years ago a rector negotiated with Wardens that a housing allowance would be indexed in line with rental prices in the local area. This agreement was ignored by subsequent Wardens and parish councils who failed to budget for an increase in his housing allowance.

Where possible, the Wardens should ensure that benefits and entitlements are provided so that the minister can personally flourish and grow, for the sake of the gospel. In cases of uncertainty, it is better to err on the side of reasonable generosity.

### 3.1.5 Professional Development (PD)

It is important for the rector to be involved in ongoing PD. MT&D administer a program to help ministers in the types of PD they should undertake and gives accreditation.

The Lifelong Ministry Development (LMD) guidelines requires a) A ministry development plan, b) A minimum of 30 hours LMD activities per year and c) Journal entry for each hour of LMD activity. The LMD approved PD activities allow much scope for the minister to develop a PD plan suited to his and the church's needs.

### 3.1.6 Regular review

It is recommended that a review be conducted with the Wardens once a year. This should include an open and honest discussion about the things the rector is doing well and the areas in which he could improve.

It should be two way and the rector may make certain request of the Wardens in order to facilitate and encourage the ministry.

### 3.1.7 Disputes

It is expected that disputes be dealt with in a directly personal way within the church before escalating to the Bishop or enacting an ordinance.

Schedule 1 of the Parish Administration Ordinance states, 'The policy of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese is that any dispute between the minister and any of the members of this Church should be solved in a prayerful and pastoral manner, having regard to the rights and duties of those persons, rather than by legal decision.'

In the case of personal disputes, it may be necessary to use a mediator that both parties approve.

Conflict resolution can be time consuming and sometimes feels like a distraction to ministry. Conflict resolution requires careful communication and patience. If done properly, it may consume much time but will ensure that ministry flourishes.

The *Parish Disputes Ordinance 1999* provides helpful guidelines when a dispute involves a church worker.

## 3.2 Rector and Staff

### 3.2.1 Purpose

Paul writes to the Philippians "I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Phil 1.3-6

This section of the guidelines are designed to help staff teams of paid and voluntary workers serve together in a healthy gospel partnership that brings joy to each other and advances the work that God is doing in each church of our Diocese.

They are meant to be discussed in each church and applied to the circumstances of each staff team and the context where they serve.

### **3.2.2 Appointment**

The appointment of any staff is a long and complex matter and needs considerable care to ensure that there is real clarity on the ministry partnership that is being entered into. The SDS website provides The Employment Relations Guidelines to assist in this process and covers many important areas for the rector (with the wardens and parish council) and staff member to discuss, agree on and document.

### **3.2.3 Clear role description**

A written role description outlining the primary and secondary responsibilities of each team member brings clarity for each member of the team. It allows each member to be focused in their work, avoids confusion and potential conflict, and provides a basis for being able to assess how each member is performing. This role description should be negotiated and agreed on before a position is offered and accepted. It is helpful for a discussion to take place every year in the review process (below) about how the role description matches the reality of what is being done. Changes in the functioning of the staff member or the role description can be discussed and agreed on at this point. (Note Appendix A for a pro-forma)

### **3.2.4 Regular review**

A regular staff review enables each staff member to set goals for each year and then along with others on their 'review team' assess how they are going in achieving those goals, what additional resources or help might be needed or what changes need to be made to the goals. A 'review team' could consist of the team member and their spouse, the rector, a warden and two members of the church selected by the staff member.

### **3.2.5 Termination**

The formal ordinance that needs to be followed in the termination of a clergy person is the *Assistant Minister Ordinance 1990*, and of a layperson The Fair Work Act 2009.

There may be a whole range of factors that lead a rector to decide to terminate a staff member's appointment in the parish. Sometimes it might be guided by a changing financial situation, sometimes by changes in the needs of the parish and other times by the suitability of the staff member to carry out the ministry needed. All our relationships as Christian co-workers should be marked by love, openness and honesty. A regular review process should provide the mechanism for open discussion on how a staff member is fulfilling their role in the parish. If a rector is not happy with a staff member's conduct, performance or capacity in the ministry it is essential that this is discussed openly with a view to addressing those concerns. This is best formally documented and confirmed by both rector and staff member so there is an objective record of what reviews and discussions have occurred. It should not be a 'surprise' to the assistant minister if the rector has issues with their performance and a termination is discussed. The staff member needs to understand the rector's concerns and be able to share their perspective with a view to agreeing on a way forward.

A recommended process for a rector to follow is:

- (i) Clearly alert the assistant minister (either verbally or in writing) that they are not fulfilling their responsibilities properly and provide details of these areas. Inform them of the need to improve their conduct or performance or further develop their capacity to carry out their role, or they risk being dismissed.
- (ii) Provide the assistant minister with a reasonable amount of time to improve his or her performance or conduct.
- (iii) Offer to provide the assistant minister with appropriate training or opportunity to develop his or her skills.
- (iv) Assess whether the assistant minister has improved in their conduct, performance or capacity.



- (v) Before you dismiss the assistant minister you must tell them the reason for the dismissal and give him or her an opportunity to respond.

*[Note this is a draft recommended process and the current review of the Assistant Ministers Ordinance before Synod in 2017 is expected to outline its own process for managing a termination. These guidelines would be updated to reflect whatever process Synod decides]*

### **3.2.6 Task and relationships**

Ministry is not done in isolation - there are many tasks to be done. However, as we see in the passage above, ministry is also a partnership. Care must be taken to develop loving relationships within the staff team. This takes time and will involve opportunities to share, pray and read the scriptures together.

### **3.2.7 Regular meetings**

1. Staff team – Organised parish ministry requires weekly team meetings to co-ordinate and plan. These meetings also provide an opportunity to develop relationships within the staff team as you meet over a meal, read scripture, share and pray for each other.
2. Days away - Sometimes the pressing matters of each week can dominate the weekly staff meeting and there is little time to discuss new ideas. Going away two or three times a year, as a staff team, for two or three days allows time for a more extended time to discuss the 'big picture', new ideas of how ministry might be done as well as providing time to relax together.
3. One to one with rector – a regular meeting (monthly – six weekly) one to one, between the rector and each staff member, provides an opportunity to discuss matters in the team members areas of responsibility and to provide feedback on how they are going personally and in their role.

### **3.2.8 Team covenant (how we work together)**

Developing a team covenant or agreement on how the team functions together can contribute significantly to team harmony. This agreement covers things like how the staff team meet, how to function when members' responsibilities overlap, how to respond to other staff members' children or spouse if they serve in another staff member's ministry area, how to appoint leaders and how to resolve conflicts. (Note Appendix C for an example) Regarding team communication, it helps to clarify what things can be communicated via email and what would be better discussed in face to face conversations. Further, if there is a church office which provides working space, clarify expectations for the proportion of time spent working in that space and time spent working at home.

### **3.2.9 Professional development**

Each staff member needs to continue to develop their convictions, character and competencies to enable them to continue to be fruitful in their ministry. The rector and parish council need to agree on how much time each staff team member can devote to professional development and what financial support is available. This would cover conferences, courses of study, books and fees for mentors/courses and pastoral supervision.

Ministry Training & Development has established a professional development process called "Lifelong Ministry Development (LMD)" to provide an intentional, self-directed and accountable approach to help ministers maintain their zeal and fervour in serving the Lord (Rom 12:11). This provides a very helpful structure to professional development and provides accreditation. More details are available on the MT&D website.

### **3.2.10 Outside ministry**

Each staff member needs to be committed to serve in ministry in their church but what about their contribution to the wider church, like beach missions, camps or missions? Staff members may have much to contribute here and in turn find encouragement and source new ideas from serving in other places. Furthermore, they may be able to take and train church members. The rector and parish council need to agree on a policy.

### **3.2.11 Holidays, days off and time in lieu**

Annual leave is an entitlement to both lay-workers and clergy but public holidays for lay-workers only. Rectors with parish councils need to determine their own policy around public holidays for clergy staff.

It is also important to agree on what the expectations are on days off for each staff member and how many nights are staff expected to be doing parish ministry? Also, following particularly busy periods is there any provision for time-off in lieu? How is that organised?

### **3.2.12 Stipend, allowances and other benefits**

The Guidelines for the Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff are produced annually and available on the SDS website. These guidelines provide detailed information on many different areas, however many of the provisions are guidelines only and need to be negotiated between the rector (with the approval of the parish council) and staff member. This needs to be negotiated before an appointment is made, included in the letter of appointment and discussed in the annual review each year.

### **3.2.13 Socials**

Some opportunities for staff team members to socialise together, as well as with their spouse and children, can contribute significantly to building healthy relationships and team harmony.

## **4. Concluding Remarks**

The guidelines outlined in this document do not have legal force and cannot contravene other legislation.

It is expected that in most situations there will be gospel unity and peace involving church workers.

In the case of disputes, fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the above may be considered appropriate evidence before a tribunal or equivalent.

Hebrews 12:14 "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."

## Summary Report of the Rector Training Review Group

### Background

The Diocesan Mission (*Mission 2020*) identified four priorities. Of these the third priority is to: Equip our members to exercise their gifts. The first factor to drive this priority is: strengthening leadership skills of clergy, especially rectors.

In focusing on this priority of the *Mission 2020* the Strategic Research Group (SRG) invited a team to consider how the diocese might best address the development of rectors across the diocese. This working group included:

- The Rev Gary O'Brien (Ministry Training and Development (MT&D))
- The Rev Rob Smith (Ministry Training and Development)
- The Rev Archie Poulos (Moore College, Department of Ministry / Centre for Ministry Development (CMD))
- The Rev Philip Wheeler (Department of Evangelism and New Churches)
- The Rev Andrew Katay (rector / Strategic Research Group)
- Mr Peter Mayrick (Centre for Ministry Development / Strategic Research Group)

The Rector Development Working Group met through 2016 and made recommendations to the SRG in late 2016. The work of the Rector Development Working Group has now been superseded by the second interim report of the Licensing of Incumbents Review Committee provided to the Synod in October 2017.

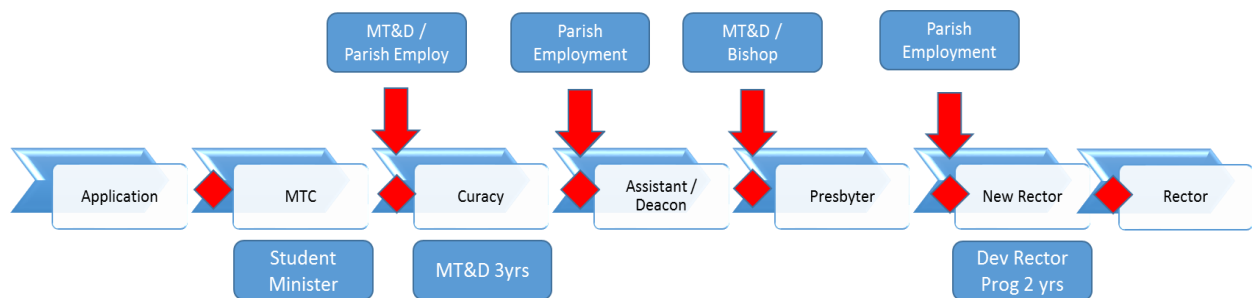
### The work of the Rector Development Working Group

Our goal was to make a recommendation to the Diocese regarding how it can play a role to equip / enable rectors with a view to optimising their ministry.

The working group came to their recommendations through the following process:

The working group explored the current situation of rector Development and the issues to be considered in making a recommendation. In summary the working group identified:

- There are a number of stages in the life of minister in the Sydney diocese (see picture below) and opportunities for clergy development however only a few of these stage are currently associated with targeted development.

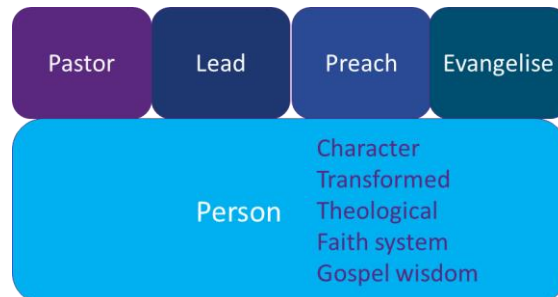


- There are a number of “gates” through which a minister passes as he becomes a rector including:
  - Application to college
  - Approval for candidacy
  - Licensing as a curate
  - Parish employment
  - Approval as a Presbyter
  - Licensing to a parish
- However there are only a few key areas of formalised training and development

- Theological training (MTC)
- Post Ordination Training (3 year MD program by MT&D)
- Developing Rector Program (2 year new rector by CMD) – recently launched

□ The working group recognised that:

- There are a wide range of characteristics required of a rector and therefore a very wide range of possible development aspects or areas that could be addressed.



- Whilst there is no formalised training program for rectors (after the initial two year program), there are numerous providers of training, education, coaching, mentoring, pastoral supervision etc. We believe this is positive for rectors and wish to encourage a range of providers to encourage a range of services and allow choice to encourage higher levels of quality.
- There is a considerable difference between a 'new rector' and a rector who has been in their role for a while. Because the Developing Rector Program was being developed as we were meeting we focussed our attention on developing rectors who have been in their role for a period longer than two years.
- Any program to develop rectors would need to be introduced in a voluntary capacity for existing rectors. It may be possible to create incentives to gain support for any such program. Having said this, a mandatory approach to rector development could be introduced for new rectors as a condition of their new licensing by the Archbishop. Such an approach would enable the diocese to phase in Rector development.
- We believe that development needs to involve three elements which we wish to encourage:
  - Diagnosis – reflection to identify key areas for personal development as a rector. NB - feedback from HR experts encouraged any program to build a rector's capacity for self-reflection.
  - Planning – once an area is identified development requires intentional action.
  - Accountability – our investigations have identified that accountability to implementation has greatly improved the outcomes for pastors.
- There are a range of options for diagnosis and accountability. We do not wish to limit the options available to ministers. Rather we wish to encourage their use and availability.

□ We wish to build a 'user pays' approach to development and encourage parish budgets to fund development of staff. Having said this we acknowledge that there are parishes that may need assistance in funding this. NB We did not explore funding solutions to a great extent.

□ There will need to be a level of coordination if a program is going to require a compliance or tracking aspect (as would be required for an incentivised or a required program). We considered that MT&D would be the most appropriate structure for this to be located however this would require additional funds to enable MT&D to have suitable capacity. Note: we did consider means to increase funding to MT&D for this however did not progress this as a group at this stage.

### Recommendation

The Rector Development Team considered a range of options before making recommendations to the SRG.

The SRG has discussed the proposal and considered –

- (a) whether the roles of wardens and parish councillors as key leaders in our parishes would benefit from further refinement, and what avenues there may be to support their development,
- (b) whether a letter from the Archbishop to wardens, encouraging them to financially support their rector's development (both as a general advice but also in conjunction with a letter to the rector regarding their professional development) would be beneficial,
- (c) the benefits of piloting the program with a number of Mission Area Groups,
- (d) including the report, "Coaching, Mentoring and Pastoral Supervision" as at appendix to the report.

The working group has completed a template for a Ministry Development Plan (available through MT&D or CMD). The working group brought this report to the Licensing of Incumbents Committee as per the request of Standing Committee in early 2017. The ideas and research from this group has informed the Lifelong Ministry Development proposal from MT&D that is before Synod 2017.

## Summary Report of Pastoral Supervision Working Group

### Background

At the 2015 session the synod carried the following resolution proposed by the Rev Robin Kinstead:

“Synod –

- (a) recognises and gives thanks to God for the sacrificial and tireless efforts of our clergy and stipendiary lay ministers in parish ministry;
- (b) notes the need for all clergy and stipendiary lay ministers to debrief in a safe, stable and suitable supervisory space;
- (c) requests that the Standing Committee ask for a report from the Pastoral Supervision Working Group, and then review and report back to the Synod.”

The Pastoral Supervision Working group began meeting in 2010 as an informal gathering of people concerned to improve the supervision of theological students and clergy of the Diocese. In 2014, the Archbishop invited this group act on his behalf to develop a proposal for enabling supervision to be conducted across the Diocese.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child abuse, and the increasing number of clergy requiring stress related absences has highlighted the need for a prophylactic program for clergy and church workers.

The Pastoral Supervision Working Group has sought to invite members who are both stakeholders in supervision and who have expressed an understanding of and interest in developing supervision in the Diocese. The working Group membership has been determined by the group. Current members are: Nicky Lock (convenor), Gary O'Brien, Andrew Ford, Jackie Stoneman, Andrew Nixon, Kara Hartley, Archie Poulos, Kerrie Newmarch, Geoff Broughton, Nigel Fortescue, Catherine Wynn-Jones, Sarah Kinstead, and Chris Edwards.

In 2017 the Pastoral Supervision Working Group was put on hold, with two members, Gary O'Brien and Kara Hartley joining the Licensing of Incumbents Review Committee.

The work of the Pastoral Supervision Working Group has now been superseded by the second interim report of the Licensing of Incumbents Review Committee provided to the Synod in October 2017.

### What is Pastoral Supervision?

Pastoral supervision provides a regular, supportive, reflective, contracted space to attend to ministry practice with a trained supervisor: it has formative, normative and restorative aspects. It is not spiritual direction, counselling, line management, coaching or mentoring, though includes elements of those practices. It is an activity that is sensitive to God's revelation, “resulting in the minister having enhanced self awareness, ministering competence, theological understanding and Christian commitment.”<sup>1</sup>

### The Need for Professional Supervision of Clergy and Church Workers

It is generally understood that professional supervision provides 3 key 'helps' for clergy.

- (a) **Formation:** Professional supervision provides help for clergy in their ongoing development in their ministry. A person being supervised brings such an event to supervision, and reflective interaction with a supervisor on this event has the formative impact of enabling the supervisee to function better in these and other circumstances in the future, through an enhanced understanding of themselves, others and their situation.
- (b) **Reporting and Prevention of Burnout:** Clergy commonly comment on the loneliness of ministry and the high expectations placed upon them. These are two contributing factors to burnout. Burnout can be attenuated through clergy having a safe place and safe person with whom to explore ministry issues.
- (c) **General Accountability:** Exploration of our Diocesan Ordinances, especially the Parish Administration Ordinance (2008), reveals that rectors have both great freedom and little accountability (except for finances, property, Professional Standards and reporting matters). There is very limited formal or informal development other than retribution for moral failure.

<sup>1</sup> Pohly, K. (2001). *Transforming the Rough Places: the Ministry of Supervision*. Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers.

In light of the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse supervision is acknowledged as providing the reflective space where the balance between being over rigid or too loose about personal boundaries can be considered in light of optimal ministry responses to those one is ministering too<sup>2</sup>.

### **Elements currently in place in Sydney Diocese for Reflective Practice**

There are currently several avenues for reflective practice for clergy and church workers in the diocese. These include Focus on Ministry Retreat groups (Les Scarborough model), Coaching (CMD, Sauerkraut, City to City, Arrow), Professional and clinical supervision of chaplains, counsellors etc in Anglicare and ARV, MT&D mentoring groups & Personal Supervision (eg Peter Moore Adifica)

The helpfulness of these practices was examined in a limited qualitative survey amongst Sydney clergy, male and female, who were currently accessing some form of these activities<sup>3</sup>. Four major themes emerged as to the usefulness of receiving some form of reflective practice:

- (i) for accountability and challenge
- (ii) for receiving practical advice and support
- (iii) to assist with examining ways in which personal and spiritual issues interfere with their ministry
- (iv) to receive overall support and strengthening in their ministry.

Additionally negative aspects of the respective reflective practices engaged in were described, though over half of the group stated that there were no downsides to these experiences: rather it had been both essential and a blessing. Negative aspects that were mentioned included:

- (i) the structure or contract not being clear, failing to be supportive enough (especially in relation to peer retreat groups).
- (ii) the difficulty of being honest with oneself and the supervisor/coach/mentor along with the sometimes draining nature of the interaction.
- (iii) The minority who considered any form of reflective practice not to be necessary and to be unwelcome by the majority of the clergy.

### **Clergy Assistance Program**

This program was launched on 1 April 2016 and aims to offer 6 sessions of counselling for “a confidential conversation whenever they recognise any of the early warning signs of stress or if they feel the need for professional counselling concerning personal or ministry matters”. See [www.anglicare.org.au/clergy-assistance-program](http://www.anglicare.org.au/clergy-assistance-program).

### **Recommendations**

The Pastoral Supervision Working Group made suggestions as part of their report to Standing Committee including:

- Creation of a 2 tier accreditation for supervisors in the Diocese.
- A register of Diocesan approved supervisors.
- Cost of supervision for clergy be undertaken by the parish.
- 10 hours of reflective practice per year, registered in some way.
- The Diocese consider making reflective practice a priority for all new clergy.

<sup>2</sup> Gutheil, T. G., & Brodsky, A. (2008). *Preventing boundary violations in clinical practice*. New York: Guilford Press, 257.

<sup>3</sup> Nicola Lock, “A Pilot Study into the Experience of Sydney Clergy in Relation To Professional Supervision as a Contribution to Their Ministry Practice”. Unpublished manuscript, (2011).