

# Safe Ministry Board and Professional Standards Unit Annual Report 2018-2019

(A report from the Safe Ministry Board and Professional Standards Unit.)

## Introduction

1. This report is provided under the *Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001 (cl 17)* and *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 (cl 86)* for the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019 (reporting period).
2. The Diocese of Sydney has taken a multi-faceted approach to the issue of safe ministry and child protection. Broadly speaking the policy objectives are –
  - (a) to exercise careful selection and screening of all clergy and church workers;
  - (b) to provide clear requirements and expectations of behaviour through the Diocesan Code of Conduct, *Faithfulness in Service*;
  - (c) to provide regular and comprehensive training and support for all clergy and church workers;
  - (d) to make a timely and caring response to all who are affected by abuse; and
  - (e) to enact just procedures to deal with respondents and persons of risk.

## Safe Ministry Board

3. The Safe Ministry Board (**SMB**) was established under the *Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001*. The SMB is tasked with ensuring that safe ministry, child protection and child abuse issues are properly dealt with throughout the Diocese. This includes the development and review of policies in these areas. The functions of the Board are defined in clauses 5 and 6 of the Ordinance.
4. The members of the SMB over the reporting period were: the Rev Dr Keith Condie (Chair), Dr Tim Channon, Ms Stephanie Cole, the Rev Steve Dinning, the Rev Steven Layson, the Rev Gary O'Brien, the Rev Paul Sampson, the Rev Janine Steele, Dr Ruth Shatford AM, Mr Alex Trevena (resigned June 2019) and Mrs Jenny Yung.
5. The SMB met 9 times in the reporting period.

## Professional Standards Unit

6. There have been some changes to the Professional Standards Unit (**PSU**) team over the reporting period.
7. Mrs Stacie Pakula joined the team in November 2018 as Senior Advisor, bringing much experience after working in private legal practice for many years.
8. Mr Steve Coleman continues to serve as Assistant Director of Professional Standards, the Rev Catherine Wynn Jones continues as PSU Chaplain (Manager, Pastoral Support and Education), Mrs Kylie Williams as Training Consultant for Safe Ministry, the Rev Neil Atwood as Parish Consultant for Safe Ministry, Mrs Brenda Sheppard as Administrative and Safe Ministry Support, Mrs Annelie Singh as Personal Assistant to the Director and the Unit's Administrator and Mr Lachlan Bryant as Director.
9. In practice much of the work of the PSU derives from the Safe Ministry Board, which has the overall responsibility to encourage all parishes and other units of the Diocese to be safe ministry and child protection aware, compliant and responsive.
10. The Director has overall responsibility for the PSU and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the complaints and procedures regarding clergy and church workers (*Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*) and the National Register (*General Synod National Register Canon 2007 Adopting Ordinance 2008*).
11. When the PSU receives a complaint alleging abuse by a member of the clergy or other church worker, the Chaplain follows this up and provides a caring response to complainants and victims of abuse. The Chaplain provides pastoral support and coordinates the provision of counselling in each case. The Chaplain works closely with the PSU Contact Persons.

12. The PSU undertakes screening of all clergy appointments on behalf of the Archbishop. The screening includes a Working With Children Check through the Office of the Children's Guardian (**OCG**) and a National Register check. The PSU provides ongoing support and advice to office holders, parishes and organisations in this regard.
13. Anglicare's Case Manager for Pastoral Care and Assistance for Care Leavers provides a pastoral and caring response to former residents of the Church of England Homes and Sydney Anglican Home Mission Society Homes, who have complained of abuse or mistreatment during their time at these Homes. The Case Manager, Ms Angela Ferguson, currently works from Anglicare's Telopea office, under the management of the Rev Dr Andrew Ford, General Manager Mission and Partnerships.

## **The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**

14. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**Royal Commission**) was announced by the Commonwealth Government in December 2012. Its terms of reference required the examination of institutional responses to the sexual abuse of children in the context of institutions throughout Australia including churches and their agencies. The Commission ran for five years, from 2013 to 2017, and its final report was published on 15 December 2017.
15. The Royal Commission represented an important opportunity for the Diocese to review both past and current practices from a 'best practice' perspective. Significant work was undertaken in PSU files relevant to the Royal Commission and a major revision of PSU policies over the period.
16. A Steering Committee was appointed by Standing Committee in December 2012 to oversee the response of the Diocese to the Royal Commission and to provide the Director of the PSU with a point of reference for undertaking this work.
17. An independent review of the position of the Diocese with respect to the final recommendations of the Royal Commission was conducted by the legal firm Prolegis over the first half of 2018. The action being taken in response to this review is the subject of a separate report to Synod on behalf of the Steering Committee.

## **Safe Ministry Blueprint Policy Documents**

18. The SafeMinistry.org.au website and the Safe Ministry Journey policy model were launched at Synod in 2015 (Resolution 24/15).
19. We have rebadged the Safe Ministry Journey policy documents as the "Safe Ministry Blueprint" policy documents. All parishes (Rectors, Wardens and Safe Ministry Representatives) are encouraged to adopt the Safe Ministry Blueprint policy documents if this has not been done already: <https://safeministry.org.au/blueprints/>.
20. In terms of the SafeMinistry website, during the reporting period there were over 37,000 unique website visits, an average of 3,118 per month.
21. A completely rebuilt version of the SafeMinistry website was launched in April 2018. The redesign allows us to expand the content offered and present that content in an easy to find format.
22. The SMB encourages all parishes that have not yet accessed the SafeMinistry website and utilised the Safe Ministry Blueprint policy documents to do so as soon as possible.

## **New Reporting Requirements for Child Sexual Abuse**

23. In response to recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the NSW Government introduced amendments to the *Crimes Act 1900 NSW* which were passed in June 2018. The reforms were designed to strengthen existing child sexual abuse laws and also included two new offences:
  - (a) Concealment of child sexual abuse; and
  - (b) Failure to reduce or remove the risk of a child becoming a victim of child abuse.
24. Synod welcomed and acknowledged these changes in Resolution 3/18.

25. The PSU issued a Circular for Parishes which provided a summary of the new reporting requirements and the expected impact of them in the church context. The circular was emailed to all Licensed Ministers, Authorised Lay Workers, Parish Councilors, Wardens and Safe Ministry Representatives in the Diocese. It is available here: <https://safeministry.org.au/important-changes-to-the-crimes-act/>.
26. Members of the clergy and church workers should ensure that they are both familiar and compliant with the new reporting requirements in their practice of ministry and seek advice or clarification from the PSU if they have any questions or inquiries about them or a particular situation in which they are uncertain whether the requirements apply.

### Archbishop's Meetings with Survivors

27. Throughout the reporting period the Archbishop has continued to make himself available to listen to complainants and relate to them pastorally. This usually includes the making of an appropriate apology on behalf of the Church. During the reporting period there were three apology meetings with survivors and their family members in PSU matters.
28. These meetings are of immense value in almost all cases and survivors are appreciative of the effort made by the Archbishop and the PSU Chaplain to facilitate these apologies.

### Screening of Lay Workers

29. All paid lay church workers in the Diocese are required to apply for the Archbishop's authority. This involves their completing a comprehensive screening and disclosure Lifestyle Questionnaire with the applicable Regional Bishop or his representative.
30. All workers in 'child-related' employment (including licensed clergy or authorised lay ministers and unpaid volunteers) must have a Working With Children Check clearance. In addition, it is recommended that parishes seek full disclosure of any relevant history and fully complete reference checks with prior supervisors or employers.
31. Persons with a criminal conviction for an offence listed in Schedule 2 of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* (including serious sexual offences and certain other offences involving children) cannot be appointed or elected as wardens, parish councilors, parish nominators or Safe Ministry Representatives.

### The Working With Children Check

32. In 2013 the NSW Government introduced laws that require all clergy and each person involved in child-related work in parishes (or organisations), to obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC) number and to have this number verified online by the relevant parish or church authority. The *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008* was amended to authorise the Registrar to collect relevant details of persons involved in child-related work in parishes. Throughout the reporting period the Registrar has undertaken a progressive collection of this data from parishes and then verified the WWCC number for each person.
33. As the term of a person's WWCC number expires 5 years after it is issued a large number of WWCC numbers were renewed during the reporting period.

### Screening of Ministry/Ordination Candidates, Clergy and Paid Lay Ministers

34. All candidates for ordination by the Archbishop are required to complete a comprehensive screening and disclosure Lifestyle Questionnaire. This is administered by Ministry Training and Development (MT&D) in consultation with the PSU.
35. Ordination/ministry candidates undergo extensive assessment and screening by way of reference-checking, general psychological testing, interviews, chaplaincy supervision reports and Moore College reports. A PSU record check and National Register check are also undertaken. The *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* provides a mechanism for pre-ordination disclosure and consideration of prior sexual misconduct or abuse.

## Training of Volunteer Lay Children's and Youth Workers – Safe Ministry Essentials/Refresher

36. The Diocese is a member of the National Council of Churches' Safe Church Training Agreement. There are 37 independent churches and other dioceses who are signatories to the Safe Church Training Agreement across Australia.
37. The *Safe Ministry Essentials* course remains the mandated safe ministry training for the Diocese followed by the *Safe Ministry Refresher* course every 3 years.
38. The PSU took on full responsibility for the delivery of Safe Ministry Training across the Diocese from Youthworks on 1 April 2017. This coincided with commencement of online safe ministry training for the Diocese. Both the *Safe Ministry Essentials* and the *Safe Ministry Refresher* courses are available online (*Essentials Online* and *Refresher Online* respectively).
39. In February 2017 the PSU set up a new website as the place to go for all safe ministry training needs in the Diocese (<https://safeministry.training>).
40. Over the reporting period the SafeMinistry.Training website had 71,056 unique visits and a total of 154,120 visits.
41. Apart from the website, the key contacts for safe ministry training inquiries are:
  - Brenda Sheppard, Safe Ministry Training Administrator; email: [brenda@safeministry.org.au](mailto:brenda@safeministry.org.au).
  - Kylie Williams, Safe Ministry Training Consultant; email: [kylie@safeministry.org.au](mailto:kylie@safeministry.org.au).

## Online Safe Ministry Training

42. Developments in online safe ministry training over the reporting period include the following:
  - The Junior Leaders course was launched in November 2018 (see further information below).
  - Additional optional modules are planned to focus on equipping people for safe ministry when working with a variety of ministry groups, such as seniors, intellectually and physically disabled people, refugees, people with English as a second language.
  - Face-to-face training remains available through regional events run by the PSU at various times throughout the year.
  - A number of new roles have been created with the new training system including Webinar Presenters, Webinar Producers (managed by the PSU) and Local Safe Ministry Online Assistants (managed by the local church to assist their members with accessing online training).
43. The key messages for parishes at this stage are:
  - (a) the PSU continues to aim for accessible, affordable, quality training for leaders in our churches no matter what the platform; and
  - (b) the online training platform will help equip people in our churches better than ever before to undertake ministry safely with a wide range of individuals and groups.
44. The numbers of people who completed online safe ministry training over the reporting period are as follows:

Online safe ministry training	
Essentials	3,152
Essentials-Non Anglican	396
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,548</b>
Refresher	3,049
Refresher-Non Anglican	185
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,234</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,782</b>

45. Costs charged for online training are \$15 for Essentials and \$10 for Refresher for Anglicans and \$17 for Essentials and \$12 for Refresher for non-Anglicans.
46. Face-to-face training was offered at 15 locations across the Diocese in November, March and June during the reporting period. The numbers of people who completed face-to-face safe ministry training during that time are as follows:

<b>Face-to-face safe ministry training</b>	
<b>Essentials</b>	165
<b>Refresher</b>	267
<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>

47. Costs charged for face-to-face training are: \$50 for Essentials and \$25 for Refresher for Anglicans and \$60 for Essentials and \$30 for Refresher for non-Anglicans.
48. For more information please visit <https://safeministry.training>.

### **Training of Ministry/Ordination Candidates and Clergy**

49. Eight Safe Ministry Modules have been developed and are being taught through Moore College, MT&D and Youthworks College as part of their courses and programs.
50. The minister of a parish and any assistant minister licensed to the parish must have satisfactorily completed safe ministry training within the last 3 years, or within 3 months after their licence is issued, and every 3 years thereafter while the licence continues.
51. All licensed clergy and other church workers in the Diocese are required to attend “Faithfulness in Service” training seminars once every three years which are organised and paid for by the Professional Standards Unit. This training has been run across the Diocese since 2005 and is next scheduled for 2020. From 2020 this training will be called “Faithfulness in Ministry” in order to distinguish its name more easily from the Faithfulness in Service code of conduct. For information and registration details for Faithfulness in Ministry 2020 please visit <https://fim.church>.

### **Safe Ministry for Junior Leaders Online Course**

52. Our Safe Ministry Junior Leaders course was launched in November 2018 and 201 junior leaders from parishes across the Diocese completed the training during the reporting period.
53. The course was developed for junior leaders between 14 and 17 years and parishes utilising this training have found it to be extremely helpful. The course has been carefully structured with age appropriate language and content. A prerequisite of the course is for parents and the senior minister to authorise the junior leader’s enrolment and for a support scaffold to be in place through their local parish consisting of a training mentor while the course is being conducted.
54. We are not aware of any other courses like this in other dioceses and denominations and we consider this to be an innovative step in the online safe ministry training area.
55. The course is offered free of charge and is only available for junior leaders in parishes in the Diocese of Sydney. There are no plans to make it more widely available at this point.
56. The course has been transformative for many of the participants. Feedback is received from every participant as part of the course design. A small sample of the type of feedback we have received from course participants is included below. In each case the junior leader was answering the question of what they have learned by undertaking the course.
- That anyone can be vulnerable. That children look up to me as a role model. That being a leader is a way of serving God and others.
  - I've learnt that I need to recognise the power I have as a leader. I've learnt a lot about how I can care for people in my church and ministry, especially the kids I lead. This course has expanded my knowledge on what power is and how to use it.

- That I should report anything I see that seems suspicious in terms of abuse, or mistreatment by another leader of a child, even if it seems like an incredibly small thing that doesn't matter at all. That I cannot treat certain kids with favoritism; even if they have the answer and want to answer all the questions, I cannot choose them every time, but must engage all the children. I am in a position of power, and so I need to be acting how Jesus would: humbly and compassionately, not misusing my power for my own desires, but using it to bring glory to God, and the best way to do this is through modelling the behavior myself, rather than ordering the children to act a certain way even though I don't act that way.
- Understanding the power that comes with my leadership position, even though it seems minor for me, the children respect me simply because of my age and position, and I need to be extremely conscious all the time of how I treat the children, what I say and do and how I act, as I should be modelling behaviour that is good for them to follow.

57. For more information please visit <https://safeministry.training/junior-leaders-course/>.

## **Domestic Abuse Awareness, Response and Prevention Training Course**

58. Following the passing of the *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines* at Synod in 2018 we have been working with Lynda Dunstan, Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser, and others to create a Domestic Abuse online training course for key ministry leaders. We are on-track for launching this course at Synod and are grateful for the input and assistance from many diocesan leaders, experts in the field of family and domestic violence as well as survivors of domestic abuse in creating this course.

## **Safe Ministry Representatives (SMRs)**

59. The role of SMRs in parishes continues to be pivotal in ensuring parishes comply with safe ministry requirements. The Rev Neil Atwood, Parish Consultant for Safe Ministry, plays an invaluable role in supporting, resourcing and equipping SMRs in their role.
60. The PSU provides support and assistance to SMRs by telephone and email. There continues to be a significant level of direct enquiry from parishes and support given to them, particularly around the requirements of the WWCC renewal process.
61. Since 2008 it has been mandatory for each parish to nominate an SMR. As at the time of writing, almost all parishes have provided current SMR details to the Registry. There are currently less than 10 parishes that have not appointed an SMR. Parishes should ensure that the appropriate paperwork has been completed notifying the Registry of the appointment of their SMR.
62. During the reporting period:
- (a) five parish-based audit/training sessions were undertaken with SMRs and their Rectors; and
  - (b) the use of PSU's centralised safe ministry database Safe Ministry Records Online (SaMRO) (which has been available to parishes through the SafeMinistry website from early 2016) continues to increase, and at the end of the reporting period 57 parishes were using it and 28 parishes from another diocese in regional NSW.

## **The Taskforce on Resisting Pornography**

63. The PSU called together a Taskforce on Resisting Pornography in early 2013 to begin looking at the impact pornography has on the church and what can be done about this.
64. In June 2016 the Standing Committee encouraged the Archbishop to set up a three year Taskforce on Resisting Pornography to address this important issue.
65. The Archbishop's Taskforce consists of the Rev Marshall Ballantine-Jones (Chairman), Mr Lachlan Bryant (PSU Director), Ms Marilyn Buckley (social worker and educator), Mr John Burns (Senior School Counsellor and psychologist, Shore School), the Rev Dr Keith Condie (Co-Director of the Institute for Mental Health & Pastoral Care with Anglican Deaconess Ministries), the Rev Gary O'Brien (MT&D), Mr Greg Powell (psychologist), Ms Karen Triggs (counsellor and psychotherapist) and Dr Patricia Weerakoon (sexologist).



66. The Taskforce is due to report progress to the Archbishop in December 2019 with any recommendations.
67. For more information please visit <https://resistporn.org/>

### **Safe Ministry Guidelines and Other Advice**

68. The PSU continues to receive inquiries about child protection and safe ministry issues from clergy and church workers in parishes. Such calls or emails are received on a daily basis with staff members receiving at least a dozen inquiries per week and sometimes many more than this.

### **Care of Survivors of Abuse and Complainants**

69. It is the role of the PSU Chaplain to care for complainants and survivors of abuse by clergy and church workers. The complaints process can be long and difficult for survivors and the Chaplain provides pastoral care and support to them throughout. This important role supplements counselling and other emergency assistance which are provided to survivors from PSU funds. A caring response is the first important step along the road to healing for survivors of abuse.

### **Tears and Hope Service**

70. Tears and Hope is a church service held each year for survivors of abuse, hosted by the Rev Ed Vaughan (Rector of St John's Darlinghurst) with the assistance of the PSU Chaplain, at which the Archbishop regularly offers an apology. In 2018 it was held on 19 November and was well attended.

### **Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme**

71. The Diocesan Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme has been established to provide financial assistance to survivors of abuse to meet their needs which arise from abuse or misconduct by clergy or other church workers. The Scheme is an alternative to litigation which can be a protracted and harrowing process for survivors. The Scheme includes a mechanism for external assessment if necessary.
72. Currently there are two identical schemes, one for matters that fall largely within the responsibility of parishes and one for Care Leavers matters that are the responsibility of the Sydney Anglican Home Mission Society (**SAHMS**).
73. Between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019 there were seven payments under the Diocesan scheme and eight payments were funded under the SAHMS scheme.
74. The Diocesan Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme was reviewed following the release of the Royal Commission's Report on Redress and Civil Litigation on 14 September 2015 and an increased cap and updated assessment matrix have now been incorporated into the Scheme.

### **National Redress Scheme**

75. The National Redress Scheme (NRS) is the Commonwealth Government's response to the Royal Commission's recommendations for redress to survivors of institutional child sexual abuse and has the necessary support of all state and territory governments. The NRS commenced on 1 July 2018 and will run for a period of 10 years. The NRS is administered by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services but the costs of redress are borne by the responsible institutions (if any) which have 'opted in' to the Scheme.
76. The PSU is providing information and advice to the Sydney Anglican National Redress Corporation, which is the entity through which the Diocese of Sydney has opted into the NRS, to support responses to NRS claims received.
77. For more information about the NRS: <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/> or call **1800 737 377**.

78. For more information about the National Anglican Participating Group visit:  
<https://anglican.org.au/our-work/national-redress-scheme/>.
79. Opting into the NRS does not preclude the operation of the Diocesan Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme which continues to operate as an alternative option for survivors who wish to engage with the Diocese directly about redress instead of going through the NRS.

## Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Complaints Protocol

80. Since 1996 the Diocese has used an established protocol for receiving complaints and allegations of child abuse or sexual misconduct by clergy or church workers. All Contact Persons are trained counsellors who may be contacted through an abuse report line (**1800 774 945** or [reportabuse@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:reportabuse@sydney.anglican.asn.au)). Reports can also be submitted via <https://safeministry.org.au/report-abuse/>. The Contact Persons provide information and support to callers as they consider their options. The Contact Persons can then assist in the documenting and reporting of allegations or complaints of abuse or misconduct.
81. Any complainant identifying possible criminal behaviour is encouraged to make a report to the NSW Police. The Contact Person or another appropriate person from the PSU is able to assist the complainant in reporting the matter to the Police.
82. The five Contact Persons are Ms Jane Thomas (Illawarra), Ms Nicky Lock (Northern Beaches), Ms Rosemary Royer (Northern Suburbs), Mr Richard Elms (Western Suburbs) and Mr Rob Carroll (Southern Suburbs).
83. Ms Margaret Fuller resigned as a Contact Person in late 2018 after faithfully and diligently serving in this role for the Illawarra since 1996. Her wisdom and care in this work has been outstanding and she will be greatly missed in this important role. We welcomed Ms Jane Thomas to the role as Contact Person for the Illawarra in late 2018.
84. The Contact Persons meet four times a year with the Director and Chaplain for training and coordination of their roles.

## Ministry Standards Ordinance

85. The *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* commenced on 1 November 2017, replacing the *Discipline Ordinance 2006* for all complaints commenced after that date. The focus of the inquiry under the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* is on whether the member of clergy or other church worker has engaged in misconduct that would call into question their fitness to hold or exercise an office, position or ministry in the Diocese. Misconduct under the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* may include abuse against an adult or child, bullying, grooming, inappropriate pastoral conduct involving a child, failing to report a serious indictable offence, and process failure, that is, failing to report, deal with or investigate sexual abuse or child abuse in circumstances where that is required by the Ordinance. Misconduct also includes the matters specified in the Offences Ordinance such as unchastity, conviction of serious criminal offences and possession, production or distribution of child exploitation material.
86. Where a complaint is received by the PSU that includes an allegation of criminal behaviour a report is made to the NSW Police if the complainant is not able to make that report.
87. The Director receives complaints against clergy and church workers of the Diocese and administers the complaints process under the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*. Each matter usually involves a Contact Person taking an initial complaint, making a report and, if applicable, offering counselling to the alleged victim. The PSU then receives the report and a file is opened. The Chaplain contacts the complainant and remains in touch with them throughout the process. If the complaint is properly made under the Ordinance, the Director serves the complaint on the Respondent. Mediation may be offered in certain cases, should it be considered suitable, such as in some matters involving allegations of bullying.
88. If the Respondent is a member of clergy or paid church worker they are offered counselling, a support person and payment of pre-approved legal costs should they require advice in responding. Depending on the response an investigation is conducted and the matter then proceeds to the



Professional Standards Committee for review and recommendations. Unresolved matters can be referred to the Professional Standards Board.

89. If the Respondent is an unpaid lay church worker they are offered counselling and a support person. Depending on the response, an investigation is conducted and it is then referred to an Adjudicator for recommendations and final determination. Unpaid lay respondents are responsible for their own legal costs if they require legal advice or representation.
90. The strongest sanction available for lay persons is a prohibition order that prevents a respondent from engaging in ministry or being appointed to any role in the church. A member of the clergy may be deposed from Holy Orders. There are also lesser sanctions and other recommendations available in appropriate circumstances. The Archbishop or relevant church authority (in the case of an unauthorised lay person) considers the final recommendations and takes action as may be required. The Archbishop is entitled to enquire as to progress of matters and the Director is obliged to keep him informed.

## **Complaints**

91. The Director received 18 new complaints under the Ordinance during the reporting period.
92. The Director made seven complaints under the Ordinance during the reporting period.
93. The Professional Standards Committee met eight times and considered 23 matters in the reporting period.
94. One matter was referred to the Professional Standards Board during the reporting period.

## **The Professional Standards Committee**

95. There are five members of the Professional Standards Committee. Under the provisions of the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*, the Committee's function is to consider complaints and make recommendations to the Archbishop concerning these matters.
96. This Committee meets as required and is currently scheduled to meet every second month.

## **Adjudicator**

97. Four matters concerning unpaid lay respondents were referred to an Adjudicator for determination during the reporting period.

## **Parish Recovery Teams**

98. Parish Recovery Teams (PRTs) are generally available to assist parishes where allegations of abuse or misconduct by clergy or church workers have arisen. A PRT works in a parish to deal with the complex pastoral issues that arise once these matters come to light. PRTs aid those members of the parish who are affected and work towards the healing of the parish as a whole.
99. Since 2007 Pastor Tim Dyer of John Mark Ministries has trained volunteers for our PRTs. There are currently 14 trained PRT consultants.
100. There were no new PRTs deployed during the reporting period for new matters. One existing PRT concluded its work during the reporting period.
101. Following the commencement of the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*, a number of complaints alleging bullying-type conduct have been lodged which the PSU is now dealing with, Tim Dyer has been training the PRTs in understanding the dynamics of bullying.

## The Professional Standards Unit Oversight Committee

102. The Standing Committee approved of the establishment of a Professional Standards Unit Oversight Committee (PSUOC) in November 2015 that monitors the finances and operations of the PSU, and receives and considers complaints made about the PSU, among other things
103. There are five members of PSUOC and the Chair of the Committee is Bishop Peter Lin.
104. PSUOC is required to meet a minimum of four times a year.

## Cooperation with NSW Government Agencies and Other Churches

105. In August 2017 the PSU convened an inter-denominational Professional Standards Network for representatives of churches across NSW and ACT. The inter-denominational Network has met four times over the reporting period and its members comprise representatives from Seventh Day Adventists (South Pacific Division), Anglican Dioceses (NSW and ACT), Australian Christian Churches (NSW and ACT), Baptist Churches (NSW and ACT), Roman Catholic Dioceses (NSW and ACT), Churches of Christ, Presbyterian Churches (NSW and ACT), The Salvation Army, and The Uniting Church Synod of NSW and ACT. Network meetings have been well attended and it has been encouraging for different denominations to share knowledge and ideas, and exchange policies and resources. A notable contribution made by the Network was a submission to the Regulating Child Safe Organisations Discussion Paper issued by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian for public consultation in early 2019.
106. The National Network of Directors of Professional Standards from Anglican Dioceses across Australia meets together each quarter. The Director of the PSU attends these meetings regularly. The Network meetings are crucial for continuing cooperation and communication between Professional Standards Directors across the nation. The value of the Network is the depth of experience concerning professional standards matters across the group as a whole. This also means the Network is well positioned to make important contributions to developments and initiatives in these areas and to work towards maintaining best practice in processes across Dioceses.

## Finance

107. PSUOC receives and monitors accounting reports for the PSU. PSU accounts are reported in the Synod Funds reports provided to members of Synod.

## Conclusion

108. The PSU and the Safe Ministry Board are committed to ensuring that the Diocese continues to promote and adopt safe ministry practices and to respond appropriately to cases of abuse in order to enable faithful and effective gospel ministry in every church community throughout the Diocese.

On behalf of the Safe Ministry Board and Professional Standards Unit.

THE REV DR KEITH CONDIE  
**Chair**

*Safe Ministry Board*

16 August 2019

LACHLAN BRYANT  
**Director**

*Professional Standards Unit*

16 August 2019