

## 2015 Report of the Standing Committee

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### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Charter

The Standing Committee is constituted under the *Standing Committee Ordinance 1897*. Its duties arise under a number of ordinances and include the following –

- (a) making arrangements for the meetings of the Synod and preparing the Synod's business, and
- (b) acting as a council of advice to the Archbishop (the "Archbishop-in-Council"), and
- (c) considering and reporting upon matters referred to it by the Synod and carrying out the Synod's resolutions, and
- (d) deliberating and conferring upon all matters affecting the interests of the Church, and
- (e) making ordinances under delegated powers, and
- (f) preparing and administering parochial cost recoveries and Synod appropriations and allocations, and
- (g) appointing persons to fill casual vacancies among persons elected by the Synod to boards etc, and
- (h) monitoring the finances of diocesan organisations.

#### 1.2 Access

Meetings are held in the Chapter House, St Andrew's Cathedral. Mail should be addressed to "The Diocesan Secretary, Standing Committee of Synod, PO Box Q190, QVB Post Office NSW 1230" (telephone (02) 9265 1555; email [rjw@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:rjw@sydney.anglican.asn.au)). Office hours are 9 am to 5 pm.

A report on each meeting is published a few days after the meeting on the website of Sydney Diocesan Secretariat at [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au).

#### 1.3 Meetings and members

Since October 2014 we have met 10 times. The names of the members will be listed in the 2014 Diocesan Year Book and on the website of Sydney Diocesan Secretariat at [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au).

During the year, the following changes took place in the membership of the Standing Committee –

- Dean Phillip Jensen ceased being a member *ex-officio* upon his retirement as the Dean of St Andrew's Cathedral.
- A vacancy arose in the position of a lay person elected by the Western Sydney Region upon the resignation of Mrs Janette Thambyrajah. The regional electors of the Western Sydney Region elected Mrs Patricia Jackson to fill the vacancy.
- A vacancy arose in the position of a minister elected by the Georges River Region upon the resignation of the Rev Peter Lin. The regional electors of the Georges River Region elected the Rev Matthew Yeo to fill the vacancy.
- Bishop Peter Lin became a member *ex-officio* upon his appointment as the Bishop of the Georges River Region.

#### 1.4 Management and structure

Each meeting of the Standing Committee is like a small Synod meeting. Our permanent subcommittees are –

Affiliated Churches Committee	Royal Commission Steering Committee
Diocesan Resources Committee	Service Review Committee
Finance Committee	Social Issues Committee
General Synod Relations Committee	Stipends and Allowances Committee

Ordinance Reviewers and Panels

Strategic Research Group

Religious Freedom Reference Group

Work Outside the Diocese Committee

The terms of reference and the membership of our permanent subcommittees are posted at [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au).

Other committees are appointed from time to time for special tasks. We thank God for the faithfulness and expertise of the people who serve on our committees.

### **1.5 Acting Dean**

Following the retirement of Dean Phillip Jensen in December 2014, we invited the Acting Dean, Canon Christopher Allan, to attend and speak, but not vote or move motions, at our meetings until the next Dean takes up office.

### **1.6 Appointment of the Rev Kanishka Raffel as the next Dean of Sydney**

We warmly welcomed the appointment of the Rev Kanishka Raffel as the next Dean of Sydney and looked forward to him joining us when he takes up this role.

### **1.7 Appointment of the Rev Philip Wheeler as the next Director of Evangelism and New Churches**

We congratulated the Rev Philip Wheeler on his appointment as the next Director of Evangelism and New Churches and committed to pray for Philip and his wife as they transition to this new and strategic ministry.

### **1.8 Bishop Peter Tasker**

We thanked Bishop Tasker for his service to the Standing Committee since he became a member in October 1993. We noted that he was due to retire as the Bishop of Liverpool in June 2004 but continued in this role until June 2009, and then continued in extensive episcopal and other functions at the request of Archbishops Jensen and Davies. We also noted that Bishop Tasker will continue as the Archbishop of Sydney's Bishop for International Relations, and gave thanks to God for his hard work and wise counsel over many years.

### **1.9 Death of Mr John Lambert AM**

We noted with sadness the death of Mr John Lambert AM, and gave thanks to God for his life and ministry, particularly for his astounding efforts on behalf of Anglican schooling throughout this State. We expressed our condolences to John's widow and his extended family.

### **1.10 Death of Bishop Barbara Darling**

We noted with sadness the death of Bishop Barbara Darling, the first tenured female lecturer at Ridley College and in 2008 the first woman to be consecrated bishop in the Diocese of Melbourne.

### **1.11 Death of Sir Harold Knight KBE DSC**

We noted with sadness the death of Sir Harold Knight KBE DSC who was a prominent lay contributor to the Diocese of Sydney, serving on the Standing Committee and as a Trustee of the Estate of the Late Thomas Moore.

### **1.12 Death of the Rev Stuart Abrahams**

We noted with sadness the death of the Rev Stuart Abrahams who served as the Director for the Vision for Growth Appeal, the Director of the Archbishop's Ministry and Support Appeals Unit and as the Chief Executive Officer of Anglican Youth and Education Diocese of Sydney. We sent our condolences to Stuart's widow and other family members.

## **2. Actions with the Archbishop**

### **2.1 Appointment of the Rev Dr Michael Stead as a new Assistant Bishop**

Under clause 5 of the *Assistant Bishops Ordinance 1947* we approved the appointment of the Rev Dr Michael Stead as an Assistant Bishop, to be the next Bishop of South Sydney to succeed Bishop Robert Forsyth upon his retirement at the end of 2015.

### **2.2 Estate of Late M.A. Grant (Sisters' Endowment)**

In December 2014 the Archbishop-in-Council appropriated \$30,000 from this Estate for distribution by the Archbishop to assist clergy, clergy widows and clergy children or orphans who are in need. The Archbishop-in-Council appropriated a further \$33,000 from this Estate in September 2015 for this purpose.

### 2.3 Parramatta '54 Free Fund

The income of this fund is to be distributed among the objects of the Diocese of Sydney as determined by the Archbishop-in-Council. During the year the amounts of \$2,052 and \$4,984 were paid to the General Synod Office for the attendance and travel equalisation costs for 4 Sydney Bishops attending the March 2014 Australian Bishops' Conference and 5 Sydney Bishops attending the March 2015 Conference respectively.

### 2.4 Parishes of Leichhardt and Canterbury with Hurlstone Park – right of nomination

The parishes of Leichhardt and Canterbury with Hurlstone Park became vacant during the year but the Archbishop was unable to declare that either parish had complied with clause 5 of the *Nomination Ordinance 2006*. Both matters were referred to the Archbishop-in-Council which determined that, in the circumstances, the parishes should not have the benefits under the Ordinance.

### 2.5 Archbishop's Ordination Policy

We received a policy from the Archbishop regarding Ordination in the Diocese of Sydney. The document sets out the minimum qualifications for ordination to the Diaconate and the Presbyterate.

### 2.6 Declaration of Thomas Hassall Anglican College as extra-parochial

The Archbishop-in-Council, pursuant to clause 7(1) of the *Schools Chapels and Chaplains Ordinance 1975*, excluded Thomas Hassall Anglican College from the Parish of Hoxton Park and declared it extra-parochial.

### 2.7 Declaration of Shellharbour Anglican College as extra-parochial

The Archbishop-in-Council, pursuant to clause 7(1) of the *Schools Chapels and Chaplains Ordinance 1975*, excluded Shellharbour Anglican College from the Parish of Shellharbour City Centre and declared it extra-parochial.

## 3. Financial and Property Administration

### 3.1 Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995

Organisations of the Synod which manage church trust property must report annually to the Synod. These reports include information in relation to members, structure, activities and a summary of the financial results, together with audited financial statements, a liquidity report, a risk management report and a charities group status report. The reports must be lodged by 30 June each year. A later lodgement date has been approved for three organisations, Anglicare, Anglican Retirement Villages and Anglican Aid whose financial year ends on 30 June.

Some of these organisations are also required to provide us with certain internal management financial information during the year.

The annual reports and audited financial statements for about 40 organisations will be tabled in the Synod. Any major problems found by the Finance Committee from a review of these financial statements and the additional internal management financial information will be reported.

### 3.2 Annual Financial Statements for the Synod Funds and Parish Funds

The annual financial statements for the Amalgamated Synod Funds and Amalgamated Parish Funds have been prepared and reported on according to an agreed review of procedures instead of an audit.

These reports are printed separately.

### 3.3 Ordination training fund

In 2014 this Fund received a Synod allocation of \$40,000 (2013 \$40,000) which it used to provide a book allowance of \$1,000 to first year candidates studying through Moore Theological College or Youthworks College for ordination in Sydney, and to meet a number of specific costs associated with preparing candidates for ordination. In exceptional cases the Fund may also provide bursaries or financial assistance to some of the students.

### 3.4 Ordinances

The following table shows the number of ordinances passed and assented to in 2009 to 2014 and in 2015 up to 18 September 2015 –

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Standing Committee	27	36	40	53	39	42	29
Synod	13	4	10	3	6	7	0
	40	40	50	56	44	49	29

A separate report lists the ordinances passed by us since the 2014 session of the Synod. There are

11 ordinances of particular interest.

The *Professional Standards Unit (Funding) Ordinance 2014* provided funding to meet the cost of an unexpected increase in the non-standard expenses of the Professional Standards Unit in 2014 and further funding to support Safe Ministry in parishes during 2015.

The *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008 (Safe Ministry) Amendment Ordinance 2015* provided for compliance with Working with Children Check and Safe Ministry Training requirements in parishes.

The *Synod Estimates Ordinance 1998 Amendment Ordinance 2015* provided for the Synod to give its approval, or otherwise determine, regarding the statements of funding principles and priorities prepared for the first ordinary session of each Synod.

The *Professional Standards Unit (Funding) Ordinance 2015* provided funding to meet the cost of an unexpected increase in the non-standard expenses of the Professional Standards Unit in 2015.

The *Synod (Governance of Diocesan Organisations) Amendment Ordinance 2015* modified the reporting and elections processes of the Synod in accordance with the Synod's Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations and for related purposes.

*Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation Ordinance 1947 Amendment Ordinance 2014* provided, among other things, that the Corporation is solely responsible for all liabilities incurred by it or on its behalf other than where another person or entity has agreed to be responsible for the liability.

*Endowment of the See (Pymont) Land Sale Ordinance 2014* authorised the sale of a residence at Pymont and the application of the proceeds of the sale towards the purchase of a residence or residences to house such senior clergy of the Diocese as the Archbishop may determine.

*St Andrew's House Trust Ordinance 2015* re-declared the trusts of the property held in the trust fund known as the St Andrew's House Trust, in order to allow the transition of the role of trustee of St Andrew's House Trust from the Glebe Administration Board to the St Andrew's House Corporation. See item 3.20.

*Synod (General Synod Assessment) Special Application Ordinance 2015* varied the trusts on which certain property of the Synod is held to enable the payment of a budgeted shortfall in the amount of the General Synod assessment in 2015. See item 6.4.

*Parish Administration (Registers) Amendment Ordinance 2015* made provision for the management and control of church and congregation registers and records.

*Cost Recoveries Framework Ordinance 2008 Amendment Ordinance 2015* clarified the calculation of gross operating receipts and provided for certain residential lease income to be excluded from the calculation of net operating receipts.

See item 3.21.

### 3.5 Parochial cost recoveries - arrears

The following table compares the arrears of cost recovery charges as at 30 June 2015 and 2014 –

	2015	2014
Cabramatta	-	6,424
Chester Hill with Sefton	-	1,895
Glenmore Park	-	28,360
Greenacre	2,089	4,472
Hornsby Anglican Chinese Church	-	6,120
Richmond	-	5,202
Rouse Hill	-	3,778
St Clair	6,450	-
St George	-	2,566
Windsor	-	5,702
	8,539	64,518

### 3.6 Remission of PCR charges

In accordance with clause 8(3) of the *Cost Recoveries Framework Ordinance 2008*, we agreed to remit \$33,428 of the variable PCR charge and \$14,525 of the land acquisition levy being amounts that would otherwise be payable by the parish of Longueville in 2015 due to the receipt of a bequest. We did so because there was material indicating a desire that the bequest be used to replace the rectory.

### 3.7 Annual financial statements from parishes

Under the *Parish Administration Ordinance 2008*, parochial units are required to lodge their audited financial statements within 7 days after their annual general meeting of parishioners.

As at 30 April 2015, 95 parochial units (35%) had not lodged a set of prescribed financial statements (compared with 81 at the same time in 2014). By 9 July 2015 this had improved so that only 4 parochial units had not lodged their financial statements, although 9 other parochial units had only lodged unsigned financial statements.

The Finance Committee has processes in place to remind parochial units of their obligations under the Ordinance, assist with any enquiries and review the statements lodged. The Finance Committee also works with the Regional Bishops to investigate and report to us on the status of the audited financial statements for parochial units that are late in lodging the required information.

### 3.8 Local revenues test for parish status

The parishes of Auburn, Balmain, Bankstown, Coogee, Enmore/Stammore, Kingsford, Mulgoa, Mt Drutt and Watsons Bay had local revenue below the requisite amount in 2014 and accordingly these parishes have been advised of the importance of ensuring their 2015 and future revenues meet the relevant threshold figures in order to retain their parish status.

### 3.9 Recommended distribution from the Diocesan Endowment for 2015

We noted the advice of Glebe Administration Board that, for the purposes of clause 5(1) of the *Diocesan Endowment Ordinance 1984*, \$4.3 million could prudently be distributed from the Diocesan Endowment in 2015 for spending by the Synod in 2016.

### 3.10 Synod Appropriations and Allocations for 2016-2018

Under clause 3 of the *Synod Estimates Ordinance 1998* we are required to prepare for the 2<sup>nd</sup> ordinary session of the 50<sup>th</sup> Synod a proposed ordinance which contains estimates for 2016, 2017 and 2018 of –

- the amount required for meeting the cost of sittings of the Synod, the maintenance of diocesan offices and the expenses of such other diocesan activities and commitments as, in our opinion, should be supported, and
- the amount which, in our opinion, should be granted to organisations under the control of Synod or to other organisations, and
- the amount of income available from endowments or other trusts for meeting the amounts referred to above in the relevant financial year.

A bill for the *Synod Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance 2015* and explanatory report is printed separately.

### 3.11 Parochial cost recoveries for 2016-2018

Under clause 5 of the *Cost Recoveries Framework Ordinance 2008*, we are required to prepare for the 2<sup>nd</sup> ordinary session of the 50<sup>th</sup> Synod an ordinance which specifies the cost recoveries charge in respect of ministry costs and parochial network costs to be paid by each parochial unit in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

A bill for the *Parochial Cost Recoveries and Church Land Acquisitions Levy Ordinance 2015* and an explanatory report is printed separately.

### 3.12 Stipends, allowances and benefits for 2016

A report on stipends, allowances and benefits for 2016 is printed separately.

### 3.13 Work Outside the Diocese

In the 6 months to 30 June 2015, the Work Outside the Diocese Committee had applied \$182,477 from a total Synod allocation in 2015 of \$201,000. It is expected that further amounts will be applied during the 6 months to 31 December 2015 from the 2015 allocation, and the reserves of \$102,487.

### 3.14 Gilbulla Memorial Conference Centre Sale Ordinance 2001

We noted that the remaining funds in the Gilbulla Fund were used by Anglican Youthworks to purchase a new conference centre at 92 Wattle Tree Road, Holgate comprising a two storey residence set on 2.5 acres.

### 3.15 Sale of Bishopscourt

The *Bishopscourt Sale Ordinance 2012* authorised the sale of Bishopscourt at any time within 5 years after the date of assent to the Ordinance, at such a price as we (acting on the recommendation of the Property Trust) approve by resolution.

During the course of the year we received regular updates from the Property Trust regarding the sale process.

### **3.16 Collective insurance buying for diocesan schools and organisations**

We encouraged Diocesan schools and organisations who currently do not participate in the Church Insurance Program to consider opportunities to harness economies of scale through aggregating their individual insurances with “like” organisations.

### **3.17 Finance Committee terms of reference and sub-delegations**

We amended the Finance Committee’s terms of reference to specify the criteria to be considered when certain standard form parish trust ordinances reach their review date. We also approved specified sub-delegations proposed by the Finance Committee.

### **3.18 General Synod Relations Committee terms of reference and sub-delegations**

We amended the General Synod Relations Committee’s terms of reference and approved a sub-delegation of the powers of the General Synod Relations Committee. These changes were made in order to allow an appropriate level of accountability regarding Synod Fund 130, which is used for accommodation and related costs in attending sessions of the General Synod.

### **3.19 Royal Commission Steering Committee terms of reference**

We revised the terms of reference for the Royal Commission Steering Committee (“RCSC”). The changes made more explicit the capacity of the RCSC to make certain submissions on our behalf and to make recommendations to us on significant matters of diocesan policy arising from the Royal Commission.

See also item 5.2.

### **3.20 Appointment of St Andrew’s House Corporation as trustee of St Andrew’s House Trust**

We noted the resignation of Glebe Administration Board (“GAB”) as trustee of the St Andrew’s House Trust and elected St Andrew’s House Corporation as the trustee of the Trust in the place of GAB.

### **3.21 But-Har-Gra**

The property at Croydon known as “But-Har-Gra” is held on trust by the Moore Theological College Council solely for such charitable purposes for and in connection with the Diocese as determined from time to time by the Archbishop and the Standing Committee. Under these trusts, Moore College has been given the management and control of But-Har-Gra since 1956.

We passed an ordinance to vary the trusts of the property so that it would be held on trust for the purposes of the Council of the College. However the Archbishop declined to assent to the ordinance as he was not satisfied that the possible use of part of the property for a residence of the Bishop of South Sydney had been adequately considered.

### **3.22 Mission Property Committee**

During the year, the Mission Property Committee informed us that it had acquired a strategically located new church site at Marsden Park. It also advised us that the new Oran Park ministry centre was officially opened on 2 May 2015.

A report about these matters is printed separately.

## **4. General Administration**

### **4.1 Elections**

The appointment of persons to serve on committees etc. continued to be a major part of our business. Some appointments are to fill casual vacancies among Synod appointees, while others are made by the Standing Committee in its own right.

From November 2014 to July 2015, 171 such positions were filled (86 for the same period in 2013 – 2014).

### **4.2 Election of members to diocesan boards and councils by the Synod or the Standing Committee**

We modified our policy with regard to elections to require that any member who nominates a person for election to the board or council of a diocesan organisation which is a body corporate must certify that the person is willing to sign a “Statement of personal faith”, and if elected to such board or council, will do so before attending any meeting of the board or council.

### **4.3 Guidelines for effective use of soft-copy agendas**

We noted Guidelines for the effective use of soft-copy agendas, and encouraged members to review these Guidelines and to consider transitioning to the use of soft-copy agendas if they have not already done so.

#### 4.4 Reports from Regional Councils

Under clause 9 of the *Regions Ordinance 1995* each regional council must give us an annual report for inclusion in our report to the Synod. The annual reports are printed separately, together with any reports for reclassification of provisional parishes under the *Parishes Ordinance 1979*.

#### 4.5 Affiliated Churches

We declared Mackay Evangelical Church, Queensland to be affiliated with the Diocese under the *Affiliated Churches Ordinance 2005*.

#### 4.6 Review of the services of Sydney Diocesan Secretariat to the Synod and Standing Committee

We undertook a review of the services provided by the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat (“SDS”) during 2014 and confirmed that the services had been provided in a satisfactory manner. We agreed the revised form of the service level standards to be provided by SDS in 2015 and reviewed the services under the revised standards during the first 4 months of 2015. Those services will be reviewed again later in 2015.

#### 4.7 Governance Oversight Committee

Last year we agreed to place the Governance Oversight Committee into abeyance until its role could be redefined in accordance with any Synod approved Governance Policy of Diocesan Organisations. The Synod approved the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations (the “Policy”) at its session in 2014. Having determined the immediate steps required to implement the Policy, we deferred further consideration of any reconstituted Governance Committee to oversee the implementation of the Policy and dissolved the current Governance Oversight Committee.

#### 4.8 Review of Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001

We appointed a committee to review the *Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001*.

We have not yet received the committee’s recommendations about this matter.

#### 4.9 Licensing of Lay Ministry

We asked the Ordinance Reform Group to prepare a draft ordinance with recommended changes to revise or replace the *Deaconesses, Readers and Other Lay Persons Ordinance 1981*.

A bill for the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* and an explanatory report for the bill are printed separately.

#### 4.10 Reconstitution of the New South Wales Council of Churches

We expressed our support for a proposed reconstitution of the New South Wales Council of Churches (“NSWCC”) and requested that an annual amount of \$15,000 (+ inflation) for NSWCC membership fees be included in the Synod’s budget for the 2016-2018 triennium. In light of the likely changes to membership requirements resulting from the proposed reconstitution, we decided not to conduct elections to fill vacancies in the office of diocesan representatives on the NSWCC at the 2015 session of Synod.

#### 4.11 Parental leave for clergy

We appointed a committee to bring us a proposal for parental leave for parish clergy in consultation with the Archbishop.

A report about this matter is printed separately.

#### 4.12 Guidelines for Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff in 2016

We approved guidelines for the remuneration of parish ministry staff in 2016 reflecting a 4% increase in recommended minimum stipend.

#### 4.13 Amendments to the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations

We amended the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations to discontinue, as a matter of policy, our involvement in the setting of borrowing limits for diocesan organisations and to clarify the liabilities for which diocesan organisations should offer their property as security. The amendments made to the Policy Guidelines in Appendix 2 are as follows –

“34. The diocesan organisation should not offer its property as security for any liability other than a liability of the diocesan organisation or a body controlled by the diocesan organisation.

~~34.35.~~ Any mortgage, charge, debenture or other negotiable instrument given by the diocesan organisation over its property ~~vested in or held by it~~ (other than a cheque drawn on a bank account held by the diocesan organisation) should include a provision limiting the liability of the diocesan organisation to the amount available to be paid in the event it is wound up.

~~35.— The borrowing limit of the diocesan organisation should be specified and any increase~~

~~of the limit should be approved by the Synod from time to time.”~~

We also amended paragraph 2 of the Statement of Personal Faith in Appendix 3 of the Policy as follows –

“2. In particular I believe –

- (a) that God's word written, the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct;
- (b) that there is only one way to be reconciled to God which is through his Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and was raised for our justification; and
- (c) that we are justified before God by faith only.”

#### **4.14 Study into effective church planting**

We noted a study into effective church planting commissioned by the Strategic Research Group and requested that a motion reflecting the recommendations from the study be moved at Synod.

We also requested that a method of maintaining a register of church plants be implemented and that best practice guidelines for church planting based on the findings of the study be circulated to parishes.

A copy of the study has been distributed to Synod members.

#### **4.15 Amendments to the Synod and Standing Committee membership**

We requested that a bill be promoted to the Synod to make changes to the qualifications and entitlements of certain members of the Synod and the Standing Committee and to improve the administration of Synod's membership.

A bill for the *Synod and Standing Committee (Membership) Amendment Ordinance 2015* and explanatory report for the bill are printed separately.

#### **4.16 Filing of incorporation ordinances**

We established a committee to oversight research to confirm that all requisite documentation relating to incorporation of diocesan bodies under the *Anglican Church of Australia (Bodies Corporate) Act 1938* has been certified and filed in accordance with that Act.

#### **4.17 Amendments to the Retirements Ordinance 1993**

We requested that a bill be promoted to the Synod which ensures that the provisions in the *Retirements Ordinance 1993* for licensing clergy after the retirement age conforms with the requirements of clause 3(4) of the *1902 Constitutions*.

A bill for the *Retirements Ordinance 1993 Amendment Ordinance 2015* and explanatory report for the bill are printed separately.

## **5. Relations with Government**

### **5.1 Social Issues Committee**

The Social Issues Committee (SIC) comprises the following members –

Dr Karin Sowada (Chair)	The Rev Dr David Höhne
Dr Megan Best	The Rev Dr Michael Jensen
Canon Sandy Grant	Mr Darren Mitchell
The Rev Dr Andrew Ford	Dr Sumithra Muthayya

The SIC provides advice to the Archbishop on issues which are referred to it by him. It also provides advice on issues referred to it by the Standing Committee, or at the request of the Synod. When resources allow, the SIC also identifies and initiates the study and discussion of social issues and matters of public policy among Anglicans in the Diocese, and interacts with Government and other external organisations through submissions to parliamentary and public inquiries. The SIC is also often the first point of contact for community groups and other organisations wishing to engage with the Diocese on matters of public policy.

Since the last Synod, the SIC has met 9 times, and has been involved in a range of matters, including –

- (a) providing a written submission to Free TV Australia and associated correspondence with the Federal Minister for Communications, regarding proposed revisions to the Commercial TV Industry Code of Practice,
- (b) providing advice and recommendations regarding the issue of divestment of investments in fossil fuel and gambling industries as part of the review of the GAB and ACPT Ethical Investment Policy (see item 7.9A),

- (c) responding to Synod's request (Resolution 16/14) for guidance as to the appropriateness of allowing yoga and similar activities to take place on church property (see item 7.8),
- (d) monitoring issues around proposals to redefine marriage and making available resources for Anglican stakeholders through the SIC web site,
- (e) assisted the Archbishop in providing a written submission to the Federal Government's Competition Policy Review concerning the de-regulation of retail trading hours on public holidays such as Christmas and Good Friday,
- (f) monitoring developments in the euthanasia debate around the country,
- (g) promoting 'Freedom Sunday' on Sunday 18 October in Anglican parishes and at the Synod, to highlight the scourge of human trafficking and slavery, and
- (h) upgrading the resources available on the SIC web site.

The SIC continues to monitor other issues, including domestic and family violence, asylum seeker policies and children in detention, constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, social housing, problem gambling, media regulation, and filtering of Internet Service Providers.

For reports, submissions and briefings on current and archived matters, please refer to SIC's web site <http://www.sie.org.au/>.

## 5.2 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

On 12 November 2012, the then Prime Minister announced that she would be recommending to the Governor-General the establishment of a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia. The Royal Commission was subsequently established by letters patent.

A report about the progress of the response of the Diocese to the Royal Commission is printed separately.

We subsequently noted that the Royal Commission released its report and recommendations on Redress and Civil Litigation. We are still considering this report.

## 5.3 Human Sexuality and the Same Sex Marriage Debate

We requested that Anglican Media, in consultation with the Chairman of the Diocesan Doctrine Commission, coordinate the communication of the Doctrine Commission's report on Human Sexuality in a variety of media, including –

- (a) the publication of the report on a dedicated and publicly accessible page on SDS's website,
- (b) the publication of a condensed version of the report in the *Southern Cross*,
- (c) the publication by Anglican Youthworks of 1,000 copies of the report in booklet form to be provided to rectors in the Diocese, members and Senators of the Australian Parliament, as well as other Christian leaders and decision-makers, and
- (d) the preparation and dissemination by Anglican Media of material conveying the key elements of the report to broader audiences.

The report is available on Diocesan Doctrine Commission page of the SDS website, in the 'Synod and Standing Committee section', under the 'Reports and Resources' menu.

We requested that a motion be moved at the Synod affirming marriage as between a man and a woman.

## 5.4 Working with Children Check

We noted that in August last year the Archbishop was advised by the Office of the Children's Guardian ("OCG") that it was auditing compliance with Working with Children Check requirements in relation to all licensed clergy in the Diocese.

In response, requisite information for 1,107 clergy and additional information about parishes and organisations in the Diocese was provided to the OCG. Following resolution of some minor discrepancies, the OCG advised that no further action or information was required.

We thanked all those who were involved in processing the Working with Children Check numbers and the audit.

## 5.5 Christian Youth Camps v Cobaw Community Health Service

Last year we reported about a decision of the Victorian Court of Appeal in the matter of *Christian Youth Camps Limited v Cobaw Community Health Services Limited*. The decision concerned Christian Youth Camp's refusal to allow Cobaw to hire a camping resort connected to the Christian Brethren denomination for the purposes of a weekend to provide support and suicide prevention seminars to same sex attracted young people. The Court upheld the earlier decision of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal that

the refusal amounted to unlawful discrimination on the basis of the sexual orientation of those who would be attending the camp.

The High Court subsequently heard and refused an application to grant special leave to appeal the Court of Appeal's decision. The main basis for the refusal was that the case involved an issue of statutory interpretation of the repealed *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* (Vic), which had later being replaced by the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic). The implication was that, since the statute has now been repealed, it was no longer appropriate to spend Court time considering its proper interpretation.

### **5.6 Special Religious Education**

We received reports about the action being taken by Anglican Youthworks and the Anglican Education Commission in response to a directive of the Department of Education and Communities that 2 books forming part of the Anglican curriculum for Special Religious Education ("SRE") not be used in State schools. The directive was subsequently reversed. However there remains a number of outstanding issues that need to be resolved as a consequence of the directive.

We noted the establishment of the Archbishop's SRE Task Force and requested that consideration be given to the anticipated level of financial resources that may be needed to protect the delivery of SRE in the Diocese.

We requested that a motion be moved at the Synod about these matters.

We are also considering with the Anglican Education Commission the possible impact of the proposed changes to Special Religious Instruction in Victoria on the delivery of SRE in New South Wales.

See item 7.4.

## **6. The International, National and Provincial Church**

### **6.1 Diocese of Bathurst**

Last year we reported about the serious financial difficulties of the Bathurst Diocese Anglican Development Fund. In particular we noted the inability of the Fund to meet its loan obligations to the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and that legal proceedings had been commenced against the former directors of the Fund, the Bathurst Property Trust and the Bathurst Bishop-in-Council for the repayment of the loan.

A group convened by the Chancellor has been monitoring these legal proceedings in the Supreme Court of New South Wales and will consider any implications arising from the decision of the Court which is expected after the forthcoming session of Synod.

In the meantime we encouraged the Archbishop to continue to walk in fellowship with the Bishop of Bathurst.

### **6.2 Viability and Structures of the Anglican Church of Australia**

See item 7.13.

### **6.3 Long Service Leave Levy**

The *General Synod Long Service Leave Canon 2010* includes an increase in the Long Service Leave ("LSL") entitlement for clergy from 10 to 13 weeks after ten years' service. It was anticipated that this increased entitlement would be funded through excess funds held by the Long Service Leave Fund. However these excess funds are no longer available.

Accordingly, the Long Service Leave levy is expected to be increased in 2015 and 2016.

We conveyed to the General Secretary our concern regarding these changes and the resulting increased financial impact this will have on individual parishes around Australia. We requested that the General Secretary consider the action that might be taken to address this issue including reverting to the original 10 week entitlement, given the changed circumstances of the LSL.

### **6.4 General Synod assessment for 2015**

We passed the *Synod (General Synod Assessment) Special Application Ordinance 2015* to meet a shortfall of \$33,000 in budgeted funding to meet the 2015 General Synod statutory amount of \$465,236. The shortfall arose due to various funding decisions made at the General Synod session not being taken into account in the preparation of our budget.

### **6.5 General Synod Financial Risk Officer**

We were informed that in November the General Synod's Standing Committee agreed in principle to the appointment of a Financial Risk Officer in the General Synod Office. We acknowledged the shared reputational risk associated with the financial failure of any diocese but suggested that –

- the greatest benefit for such a role would be working with the nine or so dioceses identified by the General Synod Financial Advisory Task Force as being at greatest financial risk, and
- the effectiveness of the role should be tested by asking each of those dioceses whether they would be willing to participate in a detailed financial review led by a Financial Risk Officer.

#### **6.6 Hosting the 17<sup>th</sup> session of General Synod**

We decided not to submit a tender to host the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the General Synod. We also conveyed to the General Secretary the recommendation that sessions of the General Synod revert to being held every four years rather than every three.

#### **6.7 Model Episcopal Standards Ordinance**

During the year the General Secretary circulated a Model Episcopal Standards Ordinance to each diocese for consideration and potential adoption. We referred the Model Ordinance to our General Synod Relations Committee with the request that it make recommendations about this matter in due course.

#### **6.8 GAFCON Primates meeting**

We noted the communique signed by the GAFCON Primates following their meeting in London in April. We also noted that the Archbishop attended this meeting at the invitation of the Primates.

#### **6.9 Episcopal appointments in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn**

We congratulated Archdeacon Matt Brain on his appointment as assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn and Bishop Trevor Edwards on his appointment as bishop responsible for ministry development in the western and coastal regions of the diocese. We extended our prayerful best wishes to them both as they commence in these roles.

#### **6.10 Constitutional definition of “Diocesan Council”**

We requested that a bill be promoted to the Synod to assent to the *Constitution Amendment (Diocesan Council) Canon 2010*. The Canon amends the definition of “Diocesan Council” in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia.

The bill and explanatory statement for the bill are printed separately.

### **7. Sydney Synod Matters**

#### **7.1 Large Property Receipts Policy**

In response to Synod’s request at its session last year, we reviewed the Large Property Receipts Policy in consultation with parishes and have prepared a revised policy for consideration by the Synod this year.

A report about this matter is printed separately.

#### **7.2 17/07 Climate change**

By resolution 17/07, the Synod accepted the emerging scientific consensus that climate change is occurring and supported the need for Christian responses to the potential problems and opportunities that arise from climate change including –

- (a) praying for our world and using every opportunity to speak of the Lordship of Jesus Christ,
- (b) Christian ministry to those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change such as farmers, rural communities, the homeless and refugees,
- (c) the setting of a godly example of good stewardship in our personal and communal lives,
- (d) education of our children about a biblical understanding of creation and our role as its stewards and carers,
- (e) the development and implementation of an environmental policy within each Parish and Diocesan organisation which expresses principles of good environmental stewardship and care, and
- (f) encouraging governments at all levels to take climate change seriously and to make wise policy decisions to deal with its effects.

In 2008, we reported on responses to resolution 17/07 from the Property Trust and the Sydney Diocesan Secretariat.

This year we received a report about the steps being taken to reduce the environmental impact of St Andrew’s House, including the receipt of a formal 5.0 star energy rating under the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (“NABERS”).

A report about this matter is printed separately.

### **7.3 35/09 Tertiary Education Ministry Oversight Committee**

The Synod constituted the Tertiary Education Ministry Oversight Committee by resolution 35/09. During the year, TEMOC reviewed its constituting resolution in light of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations.

We requested a motion amending TEMOC's constituting resolution as a result of the review be promoted to the Synod.

### **7.4 40/10 Implementation of the Grievance Policy and Procedure**

By resolution 40/10, the Synod requested that we undertake a review of the Grievance Policy and Procedure passed by the Synod in October 2010.

A report about this matter and revised policy are printed separately.

### **7.5 41/10 Amendments to the Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917**

By resolution 41/10, the Synod requested a number of amendments to the *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917* concerning various governance matters relevant to the proper functioning of the Property Trust.

During the year we were informed that the Diocese of Bathurst was not in a position to support any amendments to the *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917* for the time being. We were also informed that the Diocese of Newcastle may have renewed reservations about accepting one of the amendments proposed in resolution 41/10, namely the capacity for the bishop of a diocese to remove himself as an *ex officio* member of the corporate trustee.

We are therefore not in a position to have an amending bill promoted to the NSW Parliament in the foreseeable future. However the matter will be reviewed next year.

### **7.6 14/12 Special Religious Education**

By resolution 14/12, the Synod –

- (a) affirmed its commitment to the sustaining of high quality Special Religious Education ("SRE") within all Government primary schools within the Diocese, and
- (b) requested the Standing Committee to address the need for sufficient funds for this ministry in its 2014-2015 budget.

For the purposes of releasing the previously committed \$200,000 to support the financial cost of the SRE Office in 2015, we declared our satisfaction with the structure and responsibilities of the "SRE Office" established within Youthworks. We also –

- (a) endorsed the appointment of a full-time Director of Curriculum and a full-time Director of Quality Assurance in the SRE Office if sufficient Synod funds are made available to Youthworks in 2016, and
- (b) noted that in 2015 Youthworks will have Synod funding for a part-time Director of Curriculum and a part-time Director of Quality Assurance once the \$200,000 grant to support the financial cost of the SRE Office has been released, and
- (c) agreed to consider an additional \$125,000 in the 2015 Appropriations and Allocations Ordinance so as to enable Youthworks to appoint a full-time Director of Curriculum and a full-time Director of Quality Assurance for 2016.

A report about Synod funding for the triennium 2016 – 2018, including amounts allocated for the SRE Office, is printed separately.

During the year we completed an audit of Anglican SRE in Government Primary Schools in the Diocese. As a result of the audit we requested that the following action be taken to ensure that high quality SRE is sustained.

Firstly, we requested that each parish, with Anglican Youthworks' support and encouragement, undertake a thorough analysis of its current SRE ministry with a view to recognising where its strengths, weaknesses, deficiencies and greatest challenges lie, and then develop a comprehensive plan for future recruitment, training, mentoring, partnership and community building.

Secondly, we requested that the Anglican Education Commission discuss with other SRE providers and the Department of Education and Communities the pros and cons of establishing a maximum class size for Primary SRE classes and the Department's willingness, if an agreed class size is deemed appropriate, to enforce it just as it has done for Special Education in Ethics classes.

Thirdly, we requested that the Archbishop consider the practice of some Anglican SRE teachers in not using the authorised curriculum and the implications this could have for Diocesan compliance with Departmental requirements.

Finally, we requested that in establishing a new Office for SRE, Anglican Youthworks develop relevant training modules where required in respect to –

- (a) the maintenance of accurate and up to date data relating to the delivery of SRE,
- (b) the need for churches to recruit and train a significant number of experienced voluntary mentors who can support, observe and encourage other SRE teachers on a regular basis,
- (c) the need for churches to work at growing their partnership with local schools and education stakeholders in their local community,
- (d) the need to acquaint SRE teachers with Departmental policies and practices in respect to quality teaching and learning,
- (e) the need for additional assistance to be given to SRE teachers who are experiencing difficulty with classroom management,
- (f) the need to ensure that Work Health and Safety requirements are being met in every situation in which SRE teachers authorised by the Anglican Church are teaching,
- (g) the efficacy of the Anglican Church sustaining SRE lessons within schools where there appears to be an inability to eliminate persistent rudeness and disruptiveness within the classroom, and
- (h) to include educational technology training as part of the ongoing SRE teacher training.

### **7.7 33/13 Domestic violence and educating clergy**

By resolution 33/13, the Synod requested Moore College and Ministry Training and Development, in consultation with the Safe Ministry Board and appropriate experts as required, to review the input they already provide to the education of ordinands and clergy in regards to responding to domestic violence in marriage (and other relationships). Synod requested that Moore College and Ministry Training and Development report back with a progress report by the next session of Synod.

Progress reports from Moore Theological College and Ministry Training and Development are printed separately.

We also appointed a Task Force to further develop a diocesan response to domestic violence. We stipulated that the Task Force must consult with domestic violence victims or their representatives and with the Diocesan Doctrine Commission, Moore Theological College and Ministry, Training and Development; and that the Task Force should consider the following matters and report back to us with recommendations regarding –

- (a) the development, adoption and communication of a diocesan domestic violence policy statement, along with advice for good pastoral practice,
- (b) the facilitation of education of lay membership of our churches on the issue (eg via preparation of suitable resources),
- (c) the education of our youth in regards to the recognition and prevention of domestic violence, and
- (d) the encouragement of further developments in our education of clergy and church workers in this area (eg recognising warning signs in marriage preparation).

The Task Force is expected to commence its work shortly.

### **7.8 2/14 Review of School Chapels and Chaplains Ordinance 1975**

By resolution 2/14, the Synod requested that we consult with Chaplains and Heads of Diocesan Schools in respect to an exposure draft of a bill provided to the Synod in 2014 and bring an ordinance to the 2015 session of Synod having regard to any comments received.

A bill for the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2015* and an explanatory statement for the bill are printed separately.

### **7.9 7/14 Doctrine Commission report on fellowship meals for the proclamation of the Lord's death**

By resolution 7/14, the Synod –

- (a) recorded its appreciation of the conscientious and diligent manner in which the members of the Standing Committee carry out their responsibilities on behalf of the Synod,
- (b) respectfully requested Standing Committee to forward to the Synod any report requested by the Synod of a committee or a commission, without seeking to have that report altered by that

- committee or commission, where that committee or commission is not required to have that report referred to Standing Committee for its consideration other than for distribution,
- (c) thanked the members of the Doctrine Commission for its report to the Synod in response to Synod resolution 38/07, concerning fellowship meals for the proclamation of the Lord's Death, tabled and discussed at the meeting of the Standing Committee on February 25, 2013,
  - (d) noted that the Standing Committee having thanked the Doctrine Commission for its work on that report then requested "that the Doctrine Commission reconsider the report in the light of any comments received from members of the Standing Committee", and
  - (e) respectfully requested Standing Committee to forward to the Synod at its earliest convenience the original report.

The report of the Doctrine Commission is printed separately.

#### **7.10 16/14 Yoga and other such activities**

By resolution 16/14 the Synod –

- (a) noted that in multi-cultural Australia there are many activities available for public participation which are based on, or derived from, Eastern religious practices and beliefs, including yoga, tai chi, some martial arts, and dragon boating,
- (b) noted that some of our Diocesan churches and organisations offer such activities or allow them to be held on their premises,
- (c) noted that some Christians believe such activities are contrary to the gospel, and lead those involved in them to inadvertently worship idols and false gods, and access evil spiritual forces; and accordingly, and
- (d) requested the Social Issues Committee of the Diocese to report back to the next Session of Synod as to whether such activities are inconsistent with the gospel, and if so, should not be offered by our churches or Diocesan organisations, or allowed to be held on their premises.

A report about this matter is printed separately.

#### **7.11 19/14 Providing pastoral care to people attracted to others of the same sex**

By resolution 19/14, the Synod requested that the Standing Committee establish a committee of lay and clergy representatives to bring recommendations to the 2015 session of Synod on ways of providing pastoral care to people attracted to others of the same sex.

The committee we appointed has undertaken work in relation to this matter which we expect will be finalised for Synod in 2016.

#### **7.12 22/14 Problem gambling in NSW**

By resolution 22/14, the Synod welcomed the report of the NSW Legislative Council's Select Committee on the Impact of Gambling published in August 2014 and grieved that NSW has above-average expenditure on gambling on a per capita basis compared to national averages. The Synod also called on Sydney Anglican organisations to divest themselves of any investments in any company whose revenue from gambling exceeds either 10% of revenue or \$50 million per annum by 31 December 2014 or report to the Synod the mission imperatives of owning shares in gambling companies.

A report concerning a review of the Glebe Administration Board's ethical investment policy is printed separately.

#### **7.13 29/14 Sydney Diocesan Doctrine Commission membership and reports**

By resolution 29/14, the Synod requested that the membership of the Sydney Diocesan Doctrine Commission be posted on the Diocesan website, and links to the full texts of the Commission's reports since the year 2000 be provided at the same web location.

The Doctrine Commission's membership and reports have been posted on SDS's website [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au) under "For Synod and Standing Committee" and then "Reports and Resources".

#### **7.14 30/14 Church Land Acquisitions Levy**

By resolution 30/14, the Synod requested that the Standing Committee provide to the 2015 Synod session a report of the mid and long term views of the need for the Mission Property Committee (MPC) "Church Land Acquisitions Levy". Synod requested that this report should also outline possible future strategies for raising these funds from parishes and other sources so that parishes may be informed of expected financial commitments for mid and long term planning purposes.

A report about this matter is printed separately.

**7.15 31/14 Retention of marriage licences and same-sex marriage**

By resolution 31/14, the Synod requested us to establish a working party to consider the wisdom of clergy keeping their marriage licences if same-sex marriage becomes a reality.

A report about this matter is printed separately.

**7.16 33/14 Ministry progress and brownfields' grants**

By resolution 33/14, the Synod requested that we report on the conclusions that can be drawn from statistics in relation to brownfields churches which received grants funded from the Diocesan Endowment.

A report about this matter is printed separately.

**7.17 36/14 Further review of the *Discipline Ordinance 2006***

By resolution 36/14, the Synod requested the Standing Committee to appoint a committee consisting of three lay persons and three members of the clergy together with a person to be appointed by the Archbishop with the following terms of reference –

- (a) to review the *Discipline Ordinance 2006* and related disciplinary ordinances,
- (b) to consult with the other Dioceses in the Province with a view to exploring the feasibility of a uniform disciplinary regime in the Province,
- (c) to bring a report and any proposed amending or replacement ordinance or ordinances to the 2<sup>nd</sup> ordinary session of the 50<sup>th</sup> Synod.

We appointed a committee to review the *Discipline Ordinance 2006*. However, a key member of the committee was unavailable to participate in the review process. As such, we agreed that the report and ordinances be brought for consideration at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ordinary session of the 50<sup>th</sup> Synod in 2016.

**7.18 47/14 Report of the Viability and Structures Task Force**

By resolution 47/14, the Synod noted –

- (i) the Report of the Viability and Structures Task Force (the “Viability Report”) considered at the 2014 session of General Synod, and
  - (ii) the response of the General Synod to the Viability Report in resolution 65/14 (the “Viability resolution”), particularly the referral of the Viability Report to the dioceses for their consideration and response to the Standing Committee of the General Synod by 31 October 2014,
- (a) expressed its preliminary view that changing the structures, policies and leadership of the Anglican Church of Australia (the “ACA”) will not, of itself, adequately address the underlying challenges faced by the ACA, although agrees that the focus of work in these areas may best be pursued on a provincial basis,
  - (b) called on the Standing Committee of the General Synod to ensure that clarity and confidence in the content of the gospel message and its faithful proclamation in word and deed across the ACA, particularly in the context of local Anglican churches, are at the fore of any proposal to respond to these challenges,
  - (c) affirmed its commitment to the diocese as the unit of organisation of the ACA and therefore calls on the Standing Committee of the General Synod to ensure that it consults widely with dioceses about the Viability Report and the Viability Resolution over a reasonable time frame before formulating any significant proposals which may require the support of dioceses,
  - (d) opposed as a matter of principle any proposal which would involve an increase in the central powers of the General Synod as a means by which the challenges faced by the ACA are sought to be addressed,
  - (e) indicated that the expectation of a considered response from dioceses to the Viability Report by 31 October 2014 was unrealistic.

The Synod invited members to send any comments on the Viability Report to the Diocesan Secretary and requested us to respond to the Viability Report taking any comments from Synod members into account.

Having taken into account the views expressed in the written submissions, we sent our response to the Viability Report to the Standing Committee of the General Synod, as well as to each Sydney General Synod Representative for their information.

A copy of our response to the Viability Report is printed separately.

We subsequently also confirmed our willingness to consider appropriate diocesan boundary changes in the Province of NSW. However we expressed our in principle opposition to the suggestion in the Viability

Report to create a new South Coast diocese on the basis that any suggestion to create additional dioceses is inconsistent with attempts to address issues of viability.

**7.19 Resolutions made by the Synod in 2014 and not mentioned in this report**

Circulars were sent to parishes and organisations about the matters arising from the 2014 Synod session. Copies of Synod resolutions were sent to appropriate persons and organisations.

**7.20 Ordinances for this session**

The bills for ordinances for this session of the Synod are printed separately, together with accompanying reports or explanatory statements.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

ROBERT WICKS

*Diocesan Secretary*

18 September 2015