

**First Session of  
53<sup>rd</sup> Synod**

(to be held on 11 – 13 and 18 – 19 September 2023)

**Book 2**

(Pages 222 to 395)

**Supplementary  
Reports and Papers**

Standing Committee of the Synod  
Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney

# Supplementary Reports and Papers for 2023

## Contents

Page

### Special Reports

Discontinuation of the Affiliated Churches Program (46/19) .....	223
Implementation of recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (7/22) .....	226
Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese of Sydney (54/22) .....	237
Performance appraisals of ministry workers (54/22) .....	243
Property priorities to progress Indigenous ministry (22/22) .....	257
Recommendations from the Education Committee (28/22   29/22   30/22) .....	259
Review of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations (6/22) .....	273
Explanatory Memorandum .....	275
Exposure Draft.....	279
South Western Region buildings and property strategy (15/22) .....	300
Stipends, Allowances and Benefits for 2024 (2/05) .....	303

### Bills for Ordinances

*The principal legislation will be printed in Synod Book 3.*

Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023	
Explanatory Report.....	306
Bill.....	310

### Policies proposed to be amended

*Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines*

Domestic Violence Response Monitoring Committee Progress Report (23/18   13/22) .	312
Policy and Guidelines Introduction .....	321
Policy .....	323
Good Practice Guidelines .....	332
Appendices .....	343

### Annual Reports

Regional Councils' Annual Reports for 2022.....	379
Reporting on the National Redress Scheme (Annual Report) (42/18) .....	382
Ministry Spouse Support Fund Report Annual Report for 2022.....	384
Safe Ministry Board and Office of the Director of Safe Ministry Annual Report 2022-2023.....	385

# Discontinuation of the Affiliated Churches Program 46/19 Fellowship with Anglicans outside the Diocese

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

## Key Points

- The Affiliated Churches Program (the **Program**) was established by ordinance in 2005, to provide a mechanism whereby the Diocese could provide some basic services and support to independent churches outside the Diocese who sought affiliation. This has been a means of supporting gospel ministry around Australia. The Diocese is currently affiliated with 13 such independent churches.
- Since the commencement of the Program in 2005, the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (**FIEC**) has grown in strength and number. The FIEC, by its very nature, is well suited to provide much of the support and services to its members and has grown in recognition, which has removed much of the need for the Affiliate Program.
- A recent review undertaken by the Standing Committee found that many of the intended benefits of the Program are not actually taken up by the Affiliates, and the few services which are utilised by the Affiliates could be provided by virtue of a services arrangement directly with Sydney Diocesan Services (**SDS**).
- The Standing Committee has written directly to each Affiliate to foreshadow the possibility of discontinuing the Program and seeking comment. Feedback provided by the Affiliates indicated agreement and acceptance that the time had come to discontinue the program, and generally expressed their appreciation for the Program in its time and the desire to continue in fellowship with the Diocese.
- Standing Committee intends to discontinue the Program in 2024, while providing continued access for those independent churches who wish to access advice from SDS and the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.

## Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Synod of the Standing Committee's intention to discontinue the operation of the *Affiliated Churches Ordinance 2005* (**the Ordinance**).

## Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report 'Discontinuation of the Affiliated Churches Program', note that following discussion with and support from current Affiliated Churches, the Standing Committee intends to discontinue the Affiliated Churches Program in 2024.

## Background

4. By Resolution 46/19, the Synod, among other things, requested the Standing Committee to review the operation of the *Affiliated Churches Ordinance 2005* and bring a report to the next session of Synod with any recommendations for amendment.
5. The Affiliated Churches Program (the **Program**) was established in 2005 by the *Affiliated Churches Ordinance 2005* to enable non-Anglican churches outside the Diocese to become affiliated with the Diocese and as a consequence to access benefits of affiliation, principally in the form of services not otherwise readily available to independent churches in Australia.

6. The Program has been a means for the Diocese to support gospel ministry around Australia. The Diocese is currently affiliated with 13 independent churches (**Affiliates**), and at its peak the Diocese was affiliated with 14 independent churches (one church closed and the affiliation agreement ended).

## Discussion

### Benefits of the Program

7. The Ordinance lists ten benefits available to churches that affiliate with the Diocese under the Ordinance. Briefly, these are –
- (i) membership of the Superannuation fund,
  - (ii) Long Service Leave continuity of service,
  - (iii) insurance cover as part of insurance cover obtained by the ACPT,
  - (iv) access to administrative, secretarial and accountancy services,
  - (v) participation in the sickness and accident fund,
  - (vi) participation in Sydney's Stipend continuance insurance,
  - (vii) participation in the Clergy Removals fund,
  - (viii) ability to take out loans from Sydney Anglican Loans,
  - (ix) expressing publicly their affiliation with the Diocese,
  - (x) access to advice from the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**), and some element of participation on ODSM processes if required.
8. In practice, the thirteen Affiliates have only taken up benefits related to membership of the superannuation fund (i), accountancy advice (iv) and access to advice from the ODSM (x); as well as informal legal advice (not specifically provided for) and the benefit of credibility gained through a public expression of their affiliation (ix). Each of these benefits are able to be provided to independent churches without the formal Affiliation Program.

### Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches

9. While the scope of benefits taken up by Affiliates has been limited, it has also become apparent that the need for benefits under the Program have reduced over time. A key consideration is the increasing capability and recognition of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (**FIEC**). FIEC has grown significantly since the commencement of the Program in 2005, and is well-suited to provide support and services to its members. Most notably, the FIEC is now sufficiently well-known and regarded that Affiliates generally rely upon membership of FIEC, rather than Affiliation with Sydney, to establish 'credibility' as a Bible-based ministry. These factors have removed much of the need for the Affiliate Program.

### Continued partnership in the Gospel

10. Affiliates frequently specify partnership, expressed by prayer and encouragement, as one of the more important benefits of Affiliation. This partnership is valued by the Diocese and intended to continue; but is not reliant upon the Ordinance and formal Affiliation under the Program.

### Obligations resulting from the Program

11. The Program brings with it an obligation upon each Affiliate to provide annual returns, containing financial and ministry information, analysis and comment. These ongoing requirements are necessary as long as a formal affiliation continues; but are an unnecessary distraction for the Affiliates and the Diocese, given the benefits used and valued by Affiliates may be provided without formal Affiliation.

## Consultation with Affiliates

12. The Standing Committee wrote directly to each Affiliate in June 2023, foreshadowing the possibility of discontinuing the Program and inviting comment. Feedback provided by the Affiliates indicated agreement and acceptance that the time had come to discontinue the program, and generally expressed their appreciation for the Program in its time and the desire to continue in fellowship with the Diocese. We received responses from 11 of the 13 Affiliates. Following are three comments typical of those received –

“Thank you so much for your past affiliation with [our church]. Thanks for the helpful information and fellowship. We agree to thankfully, wind up our affiliation with you, given where the FIEC is now and greatly appreciate our past affiliation.”

“We want to first acknowledge our gratitude to the Sydney Diocese for their support of independent churches like ours when FIEC was smaller. As FIEC has grown, so has their ability to provide advice and resources. Although we have rarely sought advice from Sydney Diocesan Services, their advice has been invaluable, and knowing we can access this advice/help has been a great comfort to us, so having access to these services would be beneficial into the future.”

“I concur with your sentiments. Over the years we had need to seek help from the Sydney Diocese and each time we have received that help. I suspect being an affiliated member did not matter. Your Gospel generosity is obvious. Into the future, informal Gospel partnership rather than formal affiliation makes sense. Please pass on our gratitude. Sydney Anglicans continue to be a great example of Gospel generosity.”

## Discontinuation of the Program

13. Standing Committee intends to discontinue the Program in 2024, while providing continued access for those independent churches who wish to access advice from Sydney Diocesan Services and the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

## 7/22 Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- The Synod has requested the Standing Committee to provide a status report in relation to the actions being undertaken to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
- This report provides an update on the actions that have been taken to the recommendations of the Royal Commission that apply to the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney.

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to Synod Resolution 7/22 by providing a further update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the **Royal Commission**) that are applicable to the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney.

### Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod request the Standing Committee to provide a further update to the next session of the Synod in relation to implementation of the actions set out in the table to the report.

### Background

4. Synod resolved as follows at its 2022 session concerning implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission -

Synod, noting the report 3/19 Implementation of the Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse, requests the Standing Committee to provide a further update to the next session of the Synod in relation to implementation of the actions set out in the table to the report.

5. The Royal Commission made 58 recommendations to 'religious institutions' and 'religious organisations'. Of these, 28 relate to institutions and organisations generally and 5 recommendations relate directly to the Anglican Church of Australia. The remainder relate to other specific religious institutions and organisations.
6. For the purposes of the Royal Commission's recommendations, the Diocese of Sydney is an 'institution', an 'organisation' and an 'affiliated institution' as defined by the Royal Commission. This is because:
  - (a) The Royal Commission defines a 'religious institution' as "an entity that operates under the auspices of a particular religious denomination and provides activities, facilities, programs or services of any kind that provide the means through which adults have contact with children". It lists 'dioceses' as an example of a religious institution.
  - (b) The Royal Commission defines a 'religious organisation' as "a group of religious institutions from a particular religious denomination or faith that coordinate and/or organise together". The Anglican Church of Australia is a 'religious organisation' for this purpose.
  - (c) The Diocese of Sydney is an 'affiliated institution' for the purposes of some recommendations because of its relationship to the General Synod.

7. This report considers those recommendations of the Royal Commission that apply to the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney in these various capacities.

## **Discussion**

8. The table in the Appendix –
  - (a) lists each of the 33 recommendations of the Royal Commission that apply to the Diocese of Sydney (in columns 1 and 2);
  - (b) indicates whether or not the recommendation has been implemented (in column 3); and
  - (c) sets out the actions that have been undertaken in relation to the recommendations (in column 4), including which items have been updated since the 2022 report to Synod.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

**BRIONY BOUNDS**  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

## Implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission addressed to the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney

### Key



= full or substantial implementation.




= no or partial implementation.

*Note: This report is based on the 2022 report to the Synod. Where the Action Taken column has been updated since 2022, this is noted with “#”. All other actions are unchanged from 2022. Terminology has also been updated, where appropriate, to reflect the revised terms adopted at Synod in 2022 (such as ‘Office of the Director of Safe Ministry’ in place of ‘Professional Standards Unit’).*




### 1 Framework Recommendations concerning the Child Safe Standards

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action Taken
16.31	All institutions that provide activities or services of any kind, under the auspices of a particular religious denomination or faith, through which adults have contact with children, should implement the 10 Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission.		By resolution 3/19, Synod endorsed implementation of the Royal Commission's Child Safe Standards by institutions within the Diocese of Sydney.  The Child Safe Scheme in the <i>Children's Guardian Act 2019</i> (NSW) requires religious bodies in NSW to implement the Child Safe Standards through systems, policies and processes.  The Standards are implemented through many of the actions indicated below.
16.32	Religious organisations should adopt the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards as nationally mandated standards for each of their affiliated institutions.		The recommendation for adoption is superseded by the Child Safe Scheme under the <i>Children's Guardian Act 2019</i> (NSW), which is mandatory for religious bodies.
16.33	Religious organisations should drive a consistent approach to the implementation of the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards in each of their affiliated institutions.		#  The <i>Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2022</i> made it a function of the Safe Ministry Board to “to ensure the Child Safe Standards are implemented and maintained by Church bodies through systems, policies, and processes, including promotion of child safety, prevention of abuse and complaint handling” (cl. 6(c)).
16.34	Religious organisations should work closely with relevant state and territory oversight bodies to support the implementation of and compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards in each of their affiliated institutions.		#  The <i>Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2022</i> has provided for the Safe Ministry Board to have a consultation role with government and non-government bodies, including the Office of the Children's Guardian.



No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action Taken
16.35	Religious institutions in highly regulated sectors, such as schools and out-of-home care service providers, should report their compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards, as monitored by the relevant sector regulator, to the religious organisation to which they are affiliated.		#  <i>The Ministry Standards and Safe Ministry Amendment Ordinance 2022</i> amended the <i>Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995</i> to require organisations to provide reports to the Safe Ministry Board if it is required to report to a regulator regarding the Child Safe Standards or is the subject of a report concerning them.

## 2 Child Safe Standard 1: Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture


No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action Taken
16.36	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution in Australia should ensure that its religious leaders are provided with leadership training both pre- and post- appointment, including in relation to the promotion of child safety.		#  At the Safe Ministry Board's request, the safe ministry modules are being reviewed over the next 3 months to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of Royal Commission Recommendation 16.36. As part of this review the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (ODSM) will also be considering whether any additional leadership training module focused on addressing this Royal Commission recommendation should be developed to be taught an additional topic for the safe ministry modules or an additional online course.
16.37	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, leaders of religious institutions should ensure that there are mechanisms through which they receive advice from individuals with relevant professional expertise on all matters relating to child sexual abuse and child safety. This should include in relation to prevention, policies and procedures and complaint handling. These mechanisms should facilitate advice from people with a variety of professional backgrounds and include lay men and women.		#  <i>The Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2022</i> has made it a function of the Safe Ministry Board to "provide assistance, advice and education to Church bodies in relation to the prevention of and response to abuse of children and vulnerable persons" (cl. 7(a)). Clause 10(2) also addressed the requirement for variety of in the composition of those providing advice.
16.38	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution should ensure that religious leaders are accountable to an appropriate authority or body, such as a board of management or council, for the decisions they make with respect to child safety.		#  Accountability is provided through the regimes in the <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> and <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> . For example, the MSO includes as grounds of misconduct, process failures with respect to the investigation or reporting of abuse and also failures with respect to undertaking safe ministry training.

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action Taken
16.1	The Anglican Church of Australia should adopt a uniform episcopal standards framework that ensures that bishops and former bishops are accountable to an appropriate authority or body in relation to their response to complaints of child sexual abuse.	✓	#  The <i>Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017</i> was adopted in 2017 and has force in the Diocese of Sydney. The <i>Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) (Amendment) Canon 2022</i> was also adopted at the 2022 session of Synod.
16.39	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution should have a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse. The policy should cover all individuals who have a role in responding to complaints of child sexual abuse.	✓	#  Conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to the role of Director of Safe Ministry, members of the Ministry Standards Committee and Ministry Standards Board and Adjudicators were addressed by the Synod in 2019 via amendments to the <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> .  The <i>Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2022</i> has also addressed conflicts of interest in relation to the work of the Safe Ministry Board.
16.2	The Anglican Church of Australia should adopt a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse, which expressly covers:  a. members of professional standards bodies;  b. members of diocesan councils (otherwise known as bishop-in-council or standing committee of synod);  c. members of the Standing Committee of the General Synod; and  d. chancellors and legal advisers for dioceses.	✓	Part a. of the recommendation overlaps with recommendation 16.39 and has been addressed through the measures outlined above.  The Standing Committee has a 'Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest' regulation, which it made on 26 May 2014 under cl 6(5) of the <i>Standing Committee Ordinance 1897</i> .  The Senior Legal Counsel has developed a statement of principles concerning the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to the engagement of lawyers and any advice from the staff of SDS, the Chancellor or a Deputy Chancellor in respect of child sexual abuse matters.
16.49	Codes of conduct in religious institutions should explicitly and equally apply to people in religious ministry and to lay people.	✓	The <i>Faithfulness in Service</i> code of conduct applies to church workers who are both clergy and lay people. Compliance with the 'children's standards' under the Code is required by the <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> .
16.3	The Anglican Church of Australia should amend <i>Being together</i> and any other statement of expectations or code of conduct for lay members of the Anglican Church to expressly refer to the importance of child safety.	✓	#  See comment above regarding <i>Faithfulness in Service</i> , which applies to lay members who are church workers.  The <i>Being Together</i> statement is not in use in the Diocese of Sydney. The <i>Safe Ministry Check</i> that is required of those who undertake ministry to children includes a pledge concerning conduct relating to children.

### 3 Child Safe Standard 2: Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously





No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action Taken
16.40	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 2, wherever a religious institution has children in its care, those children should be provided with age-appropriate prevention education that aims to increase their knowledge of child sexual abuse and build practical skills to assist in strengthening self-protective skills and strategies. Prevention education in religious institutions should specifically address the power and status of people in religious ministry and educate children that no one has a right to invade their privacy and make them feel unsafe.		# ODSM has included a range of suitable resources from the Office of the Children's Guardian and other reputable providers on the safe ministry website for parishes, parents and children regarding prevention education under the resources tab.  Preventative education was also a major topic covered at the Faithfulness in Ministry conference for clergy and church workers in 2023.

### 4 Child Safe Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action
16.41	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 3, each religious institution should make provision for family and community involvement by publishing all policies relevant to child safety on its website, providing opportunities for comment on its approach to child safety, and seeking periodic feedback about the effectiveness of its approach to child safety.		Safe ministry policies and procedures are published at safeministry.org.au. The website also includes the following statement:  FEEDBACK  Our aim is to support parishes and church workers to provide care and protection for everyone by building a culture of safe ministry. Any feedback to help us review and improve is welcome. Please email your feedback to the address below  feedback@safeministry.org.au  Feedback is also invited in published documents and in the course of Safe Ministry Training.

## 5 Child Safe Standard 5: People working with children are suitable and supported

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action
16.42	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should require that candidates for religious ministry undergo external psychological testing, including psychosexual assessment, for the purposes of determining their suitability to be a person in religious ministry and to undertake work involving children.	✓	The <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> requires an assessment of the "personal, social and sexual maturity of a candidate". This is a broader definition that widens the scope of the inquiry beyond an exclusively psychosexual focus. In 2021 Ministry Training & Development ( <b>MT&amp;D</b> ), in consultation with the ODSM and the consultant screening psychologists, piloted a semi-structured interview process for selected candidates, tailored to address the broader definition.
16.43	<p>Each religious institution should ensure that candidates for religious ministry undertake minimum training on child safety and related matters, including training that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. equips candidates with an understanding of the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards</li> <li>b. educates candidates on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety;</li> <li>ii. policies regarding appropriate responses to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse, and how to implement these policies;</li> <li>iii. how to work with children, including childhood development;</li> <li>iv. identifying and understanding the nature, indicators and impacts of child sexual abuse.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	✓	<p>All students at Moore College must complete safe ministry training which is offered at the College, and participate in four modules of ODSM training which addresses much of the subject-matter listed in the recommendation. The Child Safe Standards and preventative strategies for adherence are the subject of two 4th year lectures.</p> <p>Youthworks College teaches a "Foundations of children's and youth ministry" unit (DE037-512) and TOUR unit (PC076-512i) which covers this subject matter in components on "how to work with children" and "childhood development".</p> <p>All participants in the Ministry Development Program run by MT&amp;D, which consists primarily of newly ordained ministers, complete three units on Safe Ministry conducted by the ODSM.</p>
16.4	The Anglican Church of Australia should develop a national approach to the selection, screening and training of candidates for ordination in the Anglican Church.	✓	<p>#</p> <p>This is met by the <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> (and nationally through the <i>Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017</i>) in relation to screening and training.</p> <p>The selection aspect of this recommendation is also under consideration by the General Synod Ministry and Mission Commission.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action
16.44	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, are subject to effective management and oversight and undertake annual performance appraisals.		# The Standing Committee appointed a subcommittee in June 2022 to 'bring a proposed course of action in relation to Recommendation 16.5(c) ...for all people in religious or pastoral ministry to "undergo regular performance appraisals"'. The Committee has provided an initial report and is still considering: (i) the timing of the implementation, (ii) whether the implementation should be staged, (iii) communication and education that will be required, and (iv) whether and how the conduct of performance appraisals should be legislated in the Diocese.
16.45	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, have professional supervision with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry.		# A bill for the <i>Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023</i> to provide for pastoral supervision for certain classes of church worker in the Diocese is before the Synod for consideration at this session. If the Ordinance is passed and the associated Pastoral Supervision Policy is subsequently approved, the main framework for implementation of this recommendation will be in place. It is expected that the classes of church worker to whom the Ordinance applies will expand as the availability of pastoral supervisors increases.
16.5	The Anglican Church of Australia should develop and each diocese should implement mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, clergy, religious and lay personnel):  a. undertake mandatory, regular professional development, compulsory components being professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety  b. undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision  c. undergo regular performance appraisals.		# The Archbishop's Faithfulness in Ministry (FiM) conference is run triennially. Its frequency, content and format are regularly reviewed by the Safe Ministry Board. The FiM conference in 2023 included components on part a. of the of the recommendation with a particular focus on protective behaviours training. Other child safety topics will be covered in future years. Parts b. and c. of the recommendation are addressed under 16.44 and 16.45.
16.46	Religious institutions which receive people from overseas to work in religious or pastoral ministry, or otherwise within their institution, should have targeted programs for the screening, initial training and professional supervision and development of those people. These programs should include material covering professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety.		A person from overseas – whether clergy or a lay person undertaking ministry to children - is subject to the requirements in the <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> .  This includes the same requirements applying to all such clergy and lay workers in relation to screening and training, but also includes additional requirements if the person is from another Province of the Anglican Church – most particularly a 'church ministry assessment', which involves obtaining information about the person



No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action
			<p>from an authority in the other Province.</p> <p>People from overseas will also be included in the pilot program of pastoral consultation if they meet the applicable criteria.</p>

## 6 Child Safe Standard 6: Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused


No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Actions
16.51	All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, upon receiving a complaint of child sexual abuse, an initial risk assessment is conducted to identify and minimise any risks to children.	✓	This was addressed by the Synod in 2019 via amendments to the <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> to require a risk assessment if a complaint relates to children.
16.52	All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, if a complaint of child sexual abuse against a person in religious ministry is plausible, and there is a risk that person may come into contact with children in the course of their ministry, the person be stood down from ministry while the complaint is investigated.	✓	<p>This was addressed by the Synod in 2019 via amendments to the <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> to require suspension if the Director is satisfied that –</p> <p>(a) the complaint or the substance of the complaint involves allegations of serious child-related conduct,</p> <p>(b) the complaint is not false, vexatious or misconceived, and</p> <p>(c) there is a risk that the respondent may come into contact with children in the course of their functions as a church worker.</p>
16.53	The standard of proof that a religious institution should apply when deciding whether a complaint of child sexual abuse has been substantiated is the balance of probabilities, having regard to the principles in <i>Briginshaw v Briginshaw</i> .	✓	This was addressed by the Synod in 2019 via amendments to the <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> (see cl 29(4) and associated footnote).
16.54	Religious institutions should apply the same standards for investigating complaints of child sexual abuse whether or not the subject of the complaint is a person in religious ministry.	✓	This was addressed by the Synod in 2019 via amendments to the <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> concerning the investigation of complaints referred to Adjudicators.
16.55	Any person in religious ministry who is the subject of a complaint of child sexual abuse which is substantiated on the balance of probabilities, having regard to the principles in <i>Briginshaw v Briginshaw</i> , or who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, should be permanently removed from ministry. Religious institutions should also take all necessary steps to effectively prohibit the person from	✓	<p>#</p> <p>The General Synod has passed the <i>Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Suspension) Canon 2022</i>, the <i>Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Disposition) Canon 2022</i> and the <i>Safe Ministry Legislation Amendments Canon 2022</i> to provide for mandatory suspension and deposition.</p> <p>The Canon are before the Synod for assent or adoption (as the case may be) in 2023.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Actions
	in any way holding himself or herself out as being a person with religious authority.		There is also a bill before the Synod to amend the <i>Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017</i> to provide for mandatory suspension and deposition and suspension under the professional standards regime.
16.56	<p>Any person in religious ministry who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in the case of Catholic priests and religious, be dismissed from the priesthood and/or dispensed from his or her vows as a religious</li> <li>in the case of Anglican clergy, be deposed from holy orders</li> <li>in the case of Uniting Church ministers, have his or her recognition as a minister withdrawn</li> <li>in the case of an ordained person in any other religious denomination that has a concept of ordination, holy orders and/or vows, be dismissed, deposed or otherwise effectively have their religious status removed.</li> </ol>	✓	See comment immediately above.
16.57	<p>Where a religious institution becomes aware that any person attending any of its religious services or activities is the subject of a substantiated complaint of child sexual abuse, or has been convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, the religious institution should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assess the level of risk posed to children by that perpetrator's ongoing involvement in the religious community</li> <li>take appropriate steps to manage that risk.</li> </ol>	✓	The <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> requires compliance with a <i>Person of Concern Policy</i> in these instances, which includes a risk assessment.
16.58	Each religious organisation should consider establishing a national register which records limited but sufficient information to assist affiliated institutions identify and respond to any risks to children that may be posed by people in religious or pastoral ministry.	✓	A national register has been in force in the Anglican Church of Australia since 2007.

## 7 Child Safe Standard 7: Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action
16.47	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 7, each religious institution should require that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, undertake regular training on the institution's child safe policies and procedures. They should also be provided with opportunities for external training on best practice approaches to child safety		The <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> requires all people undertaking ministry to children to undertake Safe Ministry Training on commencing to undertake than ministry and thereafter at 3 yearly intervals. This requirement has been in force for many years and was previously contained in the <i>Parish Administration Ordinance 2008</i> .
16.50	Consistent with Child Safe Standard 7, each religious institution should require all people in religious ministry, leaders, members of boards, councils and other governing bodies, employees, relevant contractors and volunteers to undergo initial and periodic training on its code of conduct. This training should include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>what kinds of allegations or complaints relating to child sexual abuse should be reported and to whom;</li> <li>identifying inappropriate behaviour which may be a precursor to abuse, including grooming;</li> <li>recognising physical and behavioural indicators of child sexual abuse;</li> <li>that all complaints relating to child sexual abuse must be taken seriously, regardless of the perceived severity of the behaviour.</li> </ol>		# Licensed clergy, authorised lay workers, other lay persons who undertake ministry to children, professional standards personnel and safe ministry personnel are required to undertake safe ministry training (which includes those parts of the FiS code of conduct relating to safe ministry to children).  The description "members of boards, councils and other governing bodies, employees, relevant contractors and volunteers" covers a very large group of people given most church members volunteer in some capacity.  This recommendation needs further consideration by the Standing Committee to determine if the scope of those required to undertake Safe Ministry Training should be expanded.

## 8 Child Safe Standard 8: Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur

No.	Recommendation	Compliance	Action
16.48	Religious institutions which have a rite of religious confession for children should implement a policy that requires the rite only be conducted in an open space within the clear line of sight of another adult. The policy should specify that, if another adult is not available, the rite of religious confession for the child should not be performed.		There is no rite of confession for children in the Diocese of Sydney.



# Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese of Sydney

## 54/22 Ministry Wellbeing and Development

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- Pastoral Supervision is designed to benefit and support church workers and the people they minister to. It is also a requirement arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
- The framework for Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese is proposed to include a Pastoral Supervision Ordinance, Policy and Guidebook.
- A Pilot Program for Pastoral Supervision is nearing completion and preliminary results from participants are positive.

*A previous report which included the fundamentals of Pastoral Supervision was received at the Third Session of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Synod (2022).*

### Purpose

1. To report to the Synod regarding progress of the Pastoral Supervision program.

### Recommendations

2. Synod note this report.
3. Synod, noting the report “Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese of Sydney” –
  - (a) affirm the importance of Pastoral Supervision, both as a measure to enhance the ministry wellbeing and development of church workers in the Diocese, and to implement recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and
  - (b) request that the Standing Committee approve a Pastoral Supervision Policy as provided for by the Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023.

### Background

4. In 2021, the Standing Committee appointed the Pastoral Supervision Committee (**the Committee**) comprising Bishop Peter Lin (Chair), Archdeacon Kara Hartley, the Rev Gary O'Brien, the Rev Archie Poulos, and the Rev Roger Cunningham, to develop a proposal for mandatory professional supervision in the Diocese. The Committee receives advice from Ms Sarah Balogh, Psychologist and Ministry Supervisor.
5. In 2022, the Synod received the report “Pastoral Consultation (Professional Supervision) Recommendation” (the **2022 Report**) from the Committee. Among other things, the 2022 Report set out –
  - (a) what pastoral supervision is,
  - (b) the merits of pastoral supervision, including with reference to the Royal Commission,
  - (c) who should receive pastoral supervision,
  - (d) common concerns regarding pastoral supervision,
  - (e) how pastoral supervision should be administered,
  - (f) a proposed phased implementation process,

- (g) two models of pastoral supervision,
  - (h) who can deliver pastoral supervision,
  - (i) measuring effectiveness/outcomes,
  - (j) costs of the program, and
  - (k) ministry reviews.
6. By Resolution 54/22 (Ministry Wellbeing and Development), the Synod, among other things –
- (a) noted –
    - (i) recommendations 16.5, 16.44 and 16.45 for national mandatory standards for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals of bishops, clergy, and lay personnel of the Anglican Church of Australia in any form of ministry of pastoral care or service in the final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse,
    - (ii) the resolution of the General Synod on 9 May 2022 encouraging dioceses to fully implement the Ministry Wellbeing and Development policy, guidelines and resources document to enhance the wellbeing and professional development of clergy and some paid church workers,
    - (iii) the report titled ‘Pastoral Consultation (Professional Supervision) Recommendation’ dated 27 July 2022 tabled at that session of the Synod, and
    - (iv) the lifelong ministry resources developed by Ministry Training & Development,
  - (b) affirmed the importance of implementing a mandatory system for the professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals of clergy and lay church workers providing pastoral care or service to enhance their ministry wellbeing and development,
  - (c) noted the [Pastoral Supervision Committee] was developing proposals for a system of mandatory professional/pastoral supervision ... for licensed and stipendiary or paid clergy, and stipendiary or paid lay church workers providing pastoral care or service including any proposed legislation and policies, and requested a report be provided to the 1st ordinary session of the 53rd Synod.
7. This report provides an update on the work of the Committee since the 2022 Report as requested by Resolution 54/22.

## Discussion

### Why do we need Pastoral Supervision?

8. The Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**Royal Commission**) was released on 15 December 2017. Volume 16 of the Final Report contains specific recommendations for the Anglican Church.
9. Recommendation 16.45 of the Final Report states –
- “Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, have professional supervision with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry.”
10. Additionally, Recommendation 16.5 (c) of the Final Report states –
- “The Anglican Church of Australia should develop, and each diocese should implement mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, clergy, religious and lay personnel) ...undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision.”
11. While the Royal Commission recommendations are not legally binding, the Diocese has an ethical and reputational imperative to implement them. This matter is explored further in the 2022 Report.
12. Accordingly, Pastoral Supervision has become a fundamental requirement and not an optional extra or luxury. As of July 2023, other major religious denominations and organisations in Australia have

already taken the step of establishing Pastoral Supervision programs, policies and frameworks. This includes the Australian Baptists (formerly the Baptist Union of Australia), the Uniting Church of Australia, as well as non-Protestant denominations and organisations.

## Supporting Churches and Church Workers

13. Pastoral Supervision has merits for the Pastoral Supervisee, the persons they minister to, other church workers, and the Diocese as a whole. A recent survey at the Faithfulness in Ministry Conference found that 30% of respondents already had Pastoral Supervision, and of those who did not 67% were either likely or very likely to want to engage in Pastoral Supervision in the future.<sup>1</sup>
14. First and foremost, Pastoral Supervision provides opportunity for personal and ministry development of the supervisee as a church worker. Through Pastoral Supervision, the individual fosters their emotional wellbeing, accountability and professional development.
15. Significantly, it contributes to a suite of preventative measures against harmful behaviour, including abuse, by growing the Pastoral Supervisee's reflective practice, self-awareness, modified thinking and behaviour, and their resilience.
16. These qualities and skills both moderate against poor resilience declining into inappropriate habits and behaviours, as well as develop and grow alignment of the inner-self with external expectations for the individual.
17. Pastoral Supervision involves conversations between a Pastoral Supervisor and Pastoral Supervisee, leading to more constructive discussions and relationships between ministry workers and parishioners.
18. Armenakis et al. observe that changes in belief and practice are facilitated by people feeling there will be support from their peers and leaders. The provision of Pastoral Supervision, and the improvements in efficacy that may flow from this, benefit not only the Pastoral Supervisee but other ministry workers and the broader team.<sup>2</sup>
19. The benefits for clergy and churches constitute an immense return on investment. The Dean of Students at Moore College, the Rev Paul Grimmond has said –
 

“I spent much of my early ministry life avoiding reflection because I was ‘too busy’. In reality, my lack of reflection was a symptom of living in reactivity and not taking responsibility for proactively managing my life. Taking time out in supervision and stepping back to see the big picture has helped me to say no more often and to live a more thoughtful and healthily balanced ministry life”.<sup>3</sup>
20. Similar supervision and professional development frameworks have long-existed for other professions, such as legal<sup>4</sup> and healthcare practitioners<sup>5</sup>.

## Pastoral Supervision Framework

21. It is proposed that the Pastoral Supervision Framework for the Diocese be comprised of an Ordinance, Policy, and Guidebook, which are each described further below.

### The Ordinance

22. The proposed Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023 (**the Ordinance**) encompasses –

<sup>1</sup> Anglican Church of Australia Diocese of Sydney, Faithfulness in Ministry, Trends from 1 minute Survey (2023)

<sup>2</sup> A. Armenakis, J.B. Bernerth, J.P. Pitts, and H.J. Walker 'Organisational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale: Development of an Assessment Instrument'. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science* (2007) 43(4) 481, 505.

<sup>3</sup> S. Balogh, 'Five misconceptions about pastoral consultation', Moore Matters, Moore Theological College (3 March 2023).

<sup>4</sup> *Legal Profession Uniform Law* (NSW) 2014

<sup>5</sup> Medical Board of Australia, Registration Standard – Continuing Professional Development (2023)

- (a) provision for the Archbishop-in-Council to declare classes of persons who are required to undertake Pastoral Supervision,
  - (b) provision for a Pastoral Supervision Policy to be approved by the Archbishop-in-Council,
  - (c) a requirement for Pastoral Supervisors to hold an approval from the Archbishop, and
  - (d) insurance requirements for Pastoral Supervisors.
23. The Ordinance will give the Pastoral Supervision Policy a legal basis. A similar legislative approach was taken for the Property Use Policy, which is approved pursuant to the *Sydney Anglican Use of Church Property Ordinance 2018*.
24. A bill and an accompanying explanatory report for the Ordinance are printed separately.

### The Policy

25. The Ordinance provides that there is to be a Pastoral Supervision Policy (**the Policy**). Having some matters in the Policy rather than the Ordinance provides more flexibility for the Policy to state the minimum requirements and also the aspirational outcomes of Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese.
26. The Ordinance sets out an indicative list of matters that may be covered in the Policy. These are explored below in further detail for the benefit of Synod members.

#### *Classes of church workers that must undertake Pastoral Supervision*

27. As outlined in the Explanatory Report for the Ordinance (printed separately), it is proposed that the Policy include a list of the classes of persons who are required to undertake Pastoral Supervision. This will enable the implementation of Pastoral Supervision to be staged (if required), by declaring broader classes of persons over time.
28. In May 2022, the Standing Committee recommended to the Archbishop that the following classes of persons should be required to undertake Pastoral Supervision –
- (a) first-time rectors from mid-2023,
  - (b) new full-time assistant ministers from the beginning of 2024, and
  - (c) all full-time parish ministry workers thereafter in a staged process based on years of service.
29. These classes will be reviewed and formalised as part of the Archbishop-in-Council making a declaration for the purposes of the Ordinance.

#### *Pre-requisites and process for a person to be approved as a Pastoral Supervisor*

30. There are two categories of Pastoral Supervisor envisaged, which have been refined since the 2022 Report –
- (a) Approved Pastoral Supervisors, who have completed a recognised qualification in pastoral supervision and who have met the requirements of the Policy, and
  - (b) Provisionally Approved Pastoral Supervisors, who have not completed a recognised qualification in pastoral supervision, but instead have relevant vocational training or ministry experience, and meet the requirements of the Policy. Supervisors in this category will be required to progress to the 'Approved' category within three years.
31. Having two categories accounts for the diversity of skills and backgrounds amongst Pastoral Supervisors, while also having regard to the supply of Pastoral Supervisors, and the requirements of the Royal Commission.
32. The Policy will provide for the Diocese to create a 'live' and accessible list of Pastoral Supervisors, making it as easy as possible for those undertaking supervision to select the supervisor they want based on factors such as area of practice, experience, cost and geographical location.
33. Insurance arrangements for Pastoral Supervisors will also be covered by the Policy, including coverage amounts in line with benchmarked norms.

*How Pastoral Supervision is to be conducted*

34. The Policy will outline the 'degree of separation' required between Pastoral Supervisors and Pastoral Supervisees, for example one should not undertake Pastoral Supervision with a Pastoral Supervisor who is related or a friend.
35. Detail around stipendiary ministry, charging for Pastoral Supervision services and a range of paid work arrangements will also be covered in the Policy in a manner consistent with existing Codes of Conduct, such as *Faithfulness in Service* Standard 8 'Financial Integrity'.

*Minimum requirements to be met by those receiving Pastoral Supervision*

36. The Policy will establish minimum standards for Pastoral Supervision that are not onerous. It is expected to include a minimum of six one-hour supervision sessions per annum. This can be pro-rated for part-time ministry workers.
37. The Diocesan Registrar and SDS Privacy Officer will continue to be involved in the development of the Policy to ensure that the Pastoral Supervision framework and program are both as user friendly as possible and meet current information security standards and protections.

*Matters under review*

38. Further matters relating to provision of Pastoral Supervision, such as delivery by stipendiary church workers, and costs of the program, remain under active consideration.
39. If an individual is engaged in stipendiary ministry, it is expected that the remuneration will be directed to the relevant parish (see *Faithfulness in Service*, Standard 8 'Financial Integrity'). Nonetheless, further consideration will be given to the appropriateness of this arrangement and any additional approvals required.
40. The costs of administering the Pastoral Supervision Framework are proposed to be borne by the Diocese. This includes resourcing to coordinate supervisors and supervisees, provide information, recruit and approve Pastoral Supervisors, and monitor compliance. It does not include the costs of the sessions.
41. Consideration will be given to alternate model(s) involving Pastoral Supervision being offered on a voluntary basis. To that end, it is noted that various supervision providers, such as Chaplaincy Australia, already list intern supervisors who are able to provide pastoral supervision free of charge or at reduced rates as part of their ongoing professional training and practical experience requirements.

**The Guidebook**

42. As an added support tool for ministry workers and churches, a Pastoral Supervision Guidebook will be developed and will include topics and answers to questions such as –
  - (a) Who is required to receive Pastoral Supervision?
  - (b) Who will be qualified to be a Pastoral Supervisor?
  - (c) How often is supervision required?
  - (d) Who will pay for supervision, and how?
  - (e) What should I expect in a supervision session?
  - (f) Where will or can supervision take place?
  - (g) Can I be supervised by someone I already know?
  - (h) Is supervision 'really' confidential? What records will be kept?
43. The Guidebook is intended to be a helpful resource for supervisors and supervisees focusing on various supervision functions: formative (educational), normative (maintaining standards of practice) and restorative (supporting the individual).

## **Pilot Program**

44. In May 2022, the Standing Committee directed the Committee undertake a Pastoral Supervision Pilot Program (**Pilot Program**) and requested the Pilot Program be reviewed once complete by Ministry Training & Development (**MTD**).
45. As at the date of writing, the Pilot Program is nearing completion. Approximately 30 participants have been involved in the Pilot Program.
46. An exit survey is being conducted as participants finish their initial 12 months of Pastoral Supervision. The survey seeks participants' views on any previous pastoral supervision, approaches to costs of supervision, previous experiences and supervision styles (if applicable), how helpful supervision was to ministry and individual, and a focus on critical supervision elements including:
  - (a) sharing experiences
  - (b) reflection and self-awareness
  - (c) approach to ministry and
  - (d) resilience.
47. At a high-level, the results of the Survey of the Pilot Program already show –
  - (a) Participants were likely to pursue supervision in the future,
  - (b) Individual supervision was the preferred option,
  - (c) There is a diversity in what individuals were prepared to pay for supervision, and
  - (d) There is a range of views about who should be paying for supervision (e.g., church, individuals themselves, a combination etc.)
48. The feedback obtained from the Pilot Program and other sources will be incorporated into the draft Pastoral Supervision Policy.
49. Accordingly, the Pilot Program appears to indicate that the benefits of Pastoral Supervision are perceived in a generally positive light – it is not merely a requirement but something that participants view as being beneficial to their ministry and to themselves as individuals.
50. Surveys of participants in Pastoral Supervision programs in countries and jurisdictions outside of Australia have similarly found beneficial results, with one study finding that 94% of respondents found Pastoral Supervision to be beneficial, worth continuing, and worth being funded by their denomination.<sup>6</sup>
51. In Q4 2023, MTD will conduct a review of the Pilot Program and provide any recommendations to the Standing Committee.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

---

<sup>6</sup> P.M. Gubi, 'A pilot evaluation study of pastoral supervision in the Moravian Church' (April 2022) Volume 25 *Journal of Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, Taylor & Francis 197, 206.

# Performance appraisals of ministry workers

## 54/22 Ministry Wellbeing and Development

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- Introducing regular performance appraisals for ministry workers in the Diocese will fulfil a recommendation of the Royal Commission. More than that, this is an opportunity to implement a practice that is also widely considered to be beneficial.
- Regular performance appraisals will assist ministry workers by providing appropriate encouragement and feedback as pertains to their ministry role. The impact of this feedback is to contribute to the self-awareness and appropriate grounding of a ministry worker.
- Given the polity of the Diocese, different performance appraisal tools will be needed to cater for ministry workers who have a ministry team leader, and those who do not. Feedback is sought on the proposed arrangements.

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to propose a course of action in relation to Recommendation 16.5(c) of the Royal Commission for all people in religious or pastoral ministry to “undergo regular performance appraisals”.

### Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report ‘Performance appraisals of ministry workers’ –
  - (a) invite members of the Synod to provide feedback to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2023 on the proposed arrangements for all ministry workers in the Diocese to undergo regular performance appraisals as contemplated in the report, and
  - (b) request the Standing Committee to implement arrangements for regular performance appraisals for all ministry workers in light of feedback received.

### Background

4. Recommendation 16.5 of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**Recommendation 16.5**) is as follows –
 

‘The Anglican Church of Australia should develop and each diocese should implement mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, clergy, religious and lay personnel):

  - (a) undertake mandatory, regular professional development, compulsory components being professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety
  - (b) undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision
  - (c) undergo regular performance appraisals.’
5. At its meeting on 27 June 2022, the Standing Committee resolved to form the Performance Appraisal Committee as follows –

'Standing Committee appoints a sub-committee consisting of the Rev Mark Charleston, the Rev Dr Raj Gupta, the Rev Dr Andrew Katay, the Rev Caroline Litchfield and the Rev Craig Schafer (Committee to elect a chair from amongst its members) to propose a course of action in relation to Recommendation 16.5(c) of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse for all people in religious or pastoral ministry to "undergo regular performance appraisals".'

6. The Rev Dr Raj Gupta was elected as chair of the sub-committee at its first meeting on 28 September 2022. The Committee has met five times in total.
7. Resolution 54/22 of the 2022 Synod included, among other things, the following matters relevant to implementing this recommendation of the Royal Commission –
  - 'Synod –
  - (a) notes –
    - (i) recommendations 16.5, 16.44 and 16.45 for national mandatory standards for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals of bishops, clergy, and lay personnel of the Anglican Church of Australia in any form of ministry of pastoral care or service in the final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse,
    - (ii) the resolution of the General Synod on 9 May 2022 encouraging dioceses to fully implement the Ministry Wellbeing and Development policy, guidelines and resources document to enhance the wellbeing and professional development of clergy and some paid church workers,
    - (iii) the [report entitled] 'Pastoral Consultation (Professional Supervision) Recommendation' dated 27 July 2022 tabled at this session of the Synod (the Recommendation), and
    - (iv) the lifelong ministry resources developed by Ministry Training & Development,
  - (b) affirms the importance of implementing a mandatory system for the professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals of clergy and lay church workers providing pastoral care or service to enhance their ministry wellbeing and development,
  - (c) notes the subcommittees of the Standing Committee referred to in paragraphs 8 and 139 of the Recommendation are developing proposals for a system of mandatory professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals for licensed and stipendiary or paid clergy, and stipendiary or paid lay church workers providing pastoral care or service including any proposed legislation and policies, and requests a report be provided to the 1st ordinary session of the 53rd Synod...'

## **Discussion**

### **Royal Commission Recommendation 16.5**

8. Child Safe Standard 5 states that 'People working with children are suitable and supported'. Recommendation 16.5 (included at paragraph 4 above), considered as a whole, proposes a suite of tools and approaches towards this goal.
9. Performance appraisals were recommended by the Royal Commission as one mechanism to ensure people who work with children were supported (the other mechanisms being professional development (16.5(a)) and professional supervision (16.5(b))).
10. Notwithstanding some ambiguity in relation to the presence of the word 'mandatory' in Recommendation 16.5 (i.e., present in the preamble, (a), and (b), but not (c)), the Diocese has an ethical and reputational imperative to implement regular performance appraisals as recommended by the Royal Commission.



11. Further, it is considered best practice for all ministry workers to have regular performance appraisals. This is a tool that assists a ministry worker by providing appropriate encouragement and feedback as pertains to their ministry role. The impact of this feedback is to contribute to the self-awareness and appropriate grounding of a ministry worker.
12. A “ministry worker”, for the purposes of this report and its recommendations, includes both employees and officeholders.

*The desired outcome*

13. The Royal Commission has recommended regular performance appraisals as a means of providing support for all ministry workers, and those working with children in particular.
14. Whilst it is necessary to formally introduce regular performance appraisals because of the Royal Commission recommendations, this catalyst provides an opportunity to implement this practice that is also widely considered to be beneficial.

## Performance appraisals

15. A variety of possibilities of what might be considered a performance appraisal have been considered, including how these may be connected with the underlying concerns of the Royal Commission. Both Mr Lachlan Bryant (Director of Safe Ministry) and Ms Vikki Napier (Parish HR Partner) have provided input.
16. The nature of ministry work is usually quite different to that of workers in secular organisations. This is reflected in the remuneration of those in ministry work, which is a stipend to ‘free up’ someone for vocational ministry. Accordingly, the assessment, or appraisal, of those in ministry work carries its challenges. We must remember that God is sovereign, and outcomes will always be subject to God’s blessing. It is commendable for a church, for example, to desire and pray for a goal of 20 conversions in a year. It is another thing to hold someone accountable to such a goal in the same way that a salesperson might be held accountable and assessed for achieving (or missing) sales targets.
17. Any performance appraisal tool(s) must take into account the significant theological differences between secular work and ministry work.
18. The foundational nature and priority of character in ministry is noted. This is part of the rationale for the Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire (**CLQ**), which is completed upon the appointment to a new ministry, or at least every 10 years. So important and foundational is character that consideration was given to fulfilling this Royal Commission recommendation by limiting regular appraisals to character. This could have been accomplished by, for example, increasing the frequency of the existing CLQ process.
19. However, ultimately, it is felt that the Royal Commission intended more by the term “performance appraisal” than merely a character appraisal. Noting that the ultimate aim of the recommendation was to assist ministry workers to be realistically and objectively grounded, a broader form of performance appraisal is merited. A more holistic performance appraisal process provides some external feedback for a ministry worker that can assist with their confidence, security and raise a wider range of issues that may fester if unchecked. Furthermore, any process that seeks to only review character will be fraught with its own inherent challenges and limitations.
20. A more well-rounded understanding of the term “performance appraisal” would certainly include observations about character. All ministry workers should aspire to one’s progress being evident to all (cf 1 Tim 4:15). However, it would also include feedback on how they are going in their role and given their particular role description. Such appraisals should also be an opportunity for the ministry worker to provide ongoing feedback to their “ministry team leader”, both about issues the ministry worker is facing within their ministry setting, and any issues that may be percolating with regard to their ministry team leader. Building such feedback loops into ministry settings helps the ministry worker to be better grounded, fosters good communication within a staff team, and also helps the ministry team leader to continue to develop.
21. The Anglican Church of Australia’s “Ministry Wellbeing and Development” report, which was noted by our Synod in Resolution 54/22, succinctly articulates the benefits of performance appraisals: “to

ensure support for ministry wellbeing, for achievement in the ministry to which they have been called, and for accountability.” The same report notes that a performance appraisal provides the opportunity:

- (a) to encourage and appreciate current strengths and ministry progress,
  - (b) to affirm the alignment with the mission of the church,
  - (c) to identify areas that need attention or improvement and outline pathways to address such areas,
  - (d) for accountability within the context of the leadership of the parish or organisation, and
  - (e) for identifying areas requiring improvement in their ministry support and the means to achieve those improvements.
22. These are all commendable opportunities that assist a ministry worker and the ministry. All concerned would benefit from these opportunities being provided routinely, and there is much overlap with the implied behavioural ends of the Royal Commission.
23. While the merit of providing performance appraisals stands on its own, there is also a reputational risk if the Diocese does not implement “performance appraisals”, in the common sense of the term, having been recommended by the Royal Commission.

#### *Terminology*

24. It is possible to use alternative terms to that of “performance appraisal”. The term “Ministry Review” has much to commend it. It captures something of the unique nature of ministry work, as distinct from secular work that we have already noted.
25. However, “performance appraisal” is preferred, given that it is such a widely used and understood term. The term “performance” is also already embedded in Ordinances such as the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*. This term also connects the implementation with what is regarded as best practice more broadly.

#### **Methodology**

26. Given Anglican Church polity, there are some challenges in implementing performance appraisals in the Diocese of Sydney, particularly for ministry workers who do not have a ministry team leader.
27. Rectors are a clear example of not having a ministry team leader per se. In Anglican Church polity, rectors are responsible for the ministry of the parish, and parish councils and wardens are responsible for the property and finances of a parish. This is somewhat different to a typical corporate structure, where a CEO is accountable to a Board. Whilst a healthy parish would be expected to have a healthy interplay between the two, the parish council is not the ministry team leader for a rector. Similarly, whilst bishops offer support, they are not ministry team leaders.
28. An Assistant Minister in a parish, on the other hand, is an example of a ministry worker who has a ministry team leader (their rector).
29. Accordingly, different performance appraisal tools will be needed to cater for ministry workers who do (formally or otherwise) have ministry team leaders, and those who do not.

#### *Ministry workers with a direct ministry team leader*

30. A proposed template has been developed in conjunction with the Centre for Ministry Development and the Parish HR Partner (Attachment A) which a ministry team leader may use to conduct a performance appraisal with a ministry worker.
31. The following approaches have been considered regarding changes to, or deviation from, the proposed template:
- (a) In the interests of transparency and rigour, alternative forms should be approved by the local bishop, the parish HR partner, OR parish council,
  - (b) No approval is needed should a ministry team leader wish to use an alternative form, or
  - (c) Alternative forms are permitted, without approval, provided that they cover the following areas in appropriately robust ways:

- (i) Ensuring that there is an up-to-date role description.
  - (ii) A two-way evaluation in relation to each area covered in the role description.
  - (iii) A mutual agreement on Gospel based outcomes for the next 6-12 months, depending on the appraisal cycle.
  - (iv) A two-way dialogue in areas of character and leadership development opportunities. It is envisaged this would include items such as spiritual life, leadership, empowering and developing and people, teamwork within the staff team, mission, and pastoral care.
  - (v) A celebration of achievements, and recognition of challenges, and discussion of future ministry.
  - (vi) An opportunity for feedback to the ministry team leader.
32. On balance, considering the principles both of flexibility but also accountability, option (c) is preferred. That is, variations to the template are permitted provided they cover the abovementioned areas of (i) to (vi) in appropriately robust ways.
33. Where a ministry worker has a ministry team leader, the performance appraisal should be conducted every 12 months. Ideally, the annual appraisal should contain 'no surprises', and be a culmination of regular meetings of a ministry team leader with ministry staff and continuous conversations.
34. The attached proposed performance appraisal template may be reviewed from time to time by the Parish HR partner, in the case of minor updates. More major updates should be approved by the Standing Committee.

#### *Ministry workers without a direct ministry team leader*

35. We have noted the uniqueness of Sydney Anglican Polity. Accordingly, a different approach will be required for ministry workers without a ministry team leader.
36. The preferred option is an externally administered "360-degree review". This is a tool to assist ministry workers to receive external feedback and be appropriately grounded. A trained facilitator can help a ministry worker (without a ministry team leader) process and constructively engage with the feedback. It is acknowledged that this tool involves an element of self-selection in that the officeholder must ultimately be the one to select those who participate. However, this is also necessary for the issues arising from the process to be constructively taken on board.
37. Noting the cost of such reviews (currently estimated to be approximately \$500, including debrief) and the higher commitment of time, it is recommended that these be done at least every 3 years. The parish (or equivalent 'employer') should cover this cost.
38. By mutual agreement, a "360-degree review" may replace any single 12-month review for a ministry worker with a ministry team leader.
39. The "360-degree review" should be done by a reputable organisation who has developed expertise in conducting 360-degree reviews. A list of recommended providers should be made available by the Diocese and maintained by the Parish HR partner. The initial list of recommended providers is proposed to be the Centre for Ministry Development, City to City, and REACH Australia. Noting that parishes often have internal contacts of others with such expertise, parishes are free to use providers from outside of this recommended list on "arm's length" terms, and ways that avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

#### *Frequency of appraisals*

40. Further consideration is required regarding the frequency of performance appraisals, particularly for ministry workers without a direct ministry team leader if "360-degree reviews" are favoured.
41. Given the more involved nature of a "360-degree review", including the cost, and noting that many of the desired outcomes of a regular performance appraisal will be achieved by other measures being contemplated by the staff development recommendation of the Royal Commission, the three yearly frequency may be an appropriate minimum for those with no ministry team leader. It is yet to be determined whether some other form of review may be required in the intervening years.

42. The Anglican Church of Australia report “Ministry Wellbeing and Development” recommended a 3 yearly cycle of reviews:
- (a) Year 1: A self-review
  - (b) Year 2: A joint review between clergy and their ministry team leader / bishop
  - (c) Year 3: A facilitated review.
43. However, this approach is not considered appropriate for several reasons:
- (a) the polity of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney,
  - (b) the tendency to operate in staff teams of varying sizes,
  - (c) the improved starting place of many of our rectors in relation to church staffing practices,
  - (d) the desire to build regular two way feedback into our culture, and
  - (e) the reality of Pastoral Supervision and Professional Development working in conjunction with performance appraisals.

*Recording the Performance Appraisal*

44. In the interests of mutual accountability and transparency, it is proposed that the Diocesan Registry keep a record of the date of the ministry worker’s last performance appraisal, and its type (eg 360-degree review provided by xxx; internal review). This is proposed to occur through an annual online declaration from the ministry worker.
45. Ministry workers are encouraged to share the insights they have gleaned from their review with their ministry coach or pastoral supervisor.

**Next steps**

46. Feedback is sought by 31 December 2023 on these proposed arrangements. Additional work will be required to determine the implementation of performance appraisals in the Diocese, particularly –
- (a) the timing of the implementation,
  - (b) whether the implementation should be staged,
  - (c) communication and education that will be required, and
  - (d) whether and how the conduct of performance appraisals should be legislated in the Diocese.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

# PROPOSED TEMPLATE

## Performance Review & Development Form

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Manager's Name:</b>		<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Date of Review Meeting:</b>			

Role Description	
Is the role description up to date?	Yes / No <i>(NB: If no, please update before proceeding with the review).</i>

**SECTION 1 – REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AGAINST POSITION DESCRIPTION**

<b>Key Performance Areas</b>	<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Staff member comments</b>	<b>Manager's Comments</b>
<i>A brief description of the main tasks that the employee is responsible for. This should reflect the Role Description.</i>	5 – Exceptional 4 - Exceeds Expectations 3 - Meets Expectations 2 - Improvement Needed 1 – Unsatisfactory	<i>For the staff member comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i>  <i>Staff member may wish to give examples of good work, or challenges in achieving requirements.</i>	<i>For the manager's comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i>  <i>Comments should provide evidence reflecting the performance rating.</i>
Responsibility 1			
Responsibility 2			
Responsibility 3			
Responsibility 4			
Responsibility 5			
Responsibility 6			

WORK OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT 6/12 MONTHS	
Gospel Outcome(s)	Goals (should be - Specific, Measurable, Realistic, with a timeframe)

**SECTION 2 - CHARACTER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Character and Leadership Development</b>	<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Staff member comments</b>	<b>Manager's Comments</b>
<p><i>A brief description of the main tasks that the employee is responsible for. This should reflect the Role Description.</i></p>	<p>5 – Exceptional                      4 - Exceeds Expectations                      3 - Meets Expectations                      2 - Improvement Needed                      1 - Unsatisfactory</p>	<p><i>For the staff member comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i></p> <p><i>Staff member may wish to give examples of good work, or challenges in achieving requirements.</i></p>	<p><i>For the manager's comments or examples/evidence of work in this area.</i></p> <p><i>Comments should provide evidence reflecting the performance rating.</i></p>
<p><b>1. Spiritual Life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You live for God, and this is demonstrated in word &amp; prayer.</li> <li>• Your life is devoted to serving him and growing in his likeness.</li> <li>• The fruit of this is seen consistency in love, joy, patience, self-control, and a faithful prayer life.</li> <li>• You are walking closely with God.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>2. Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You create and communicate a compelling vision for your ministry that motivates others.</li> <li>• You convey the purpose and importance of the church's vision and strategy and how your ministry links in with it.</li> <li>• You collaboratively pursue the vision, generate enthusiasm, and take responsibility to map out steps to achieve it.</li> </ul>			



Character and Leadership Development	Performance Rating	Staff member comments	Manager's Comments
<p><b>3. Empowering and Developing People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are committed to recruiting, training and empowering people in life and ministry.</li> <li>You are actively calling out church members to lead and take initiative and responsibility.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>4. Teamwork</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As staff team member you actively seek to build other staff members up.</li> <li>You value them for the contribution they bring to the team and seek to quickly and graciously resolve any conflict that may arise.</li> <li>You always seek to assume the best of fellow team members and don't judge their motives.</li> <li>You positively uphold staff members externally with the church body.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>5. Mission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You seek to faithfully share the gospel with people you meet.</li> <li>You welcome new people into church life.</li> </ul>			

Character and Leadership Development	Performance Rating	Staff member comments	Manager's Comments
<p><b>6. Pastoral Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You genuinely care for people and seek pastorally to ensure the people you are responsible for are looked after.</li> <li>You care for people in a holistic way, seeking to make sure their body, mind and soul are well with the Lord.</li> <li>You appropriately delegate care involving others when you are unable, or it would be inappropriate for you to be the direct pastoral carer.</li> </ul>			

**SECTION 3 – SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES, & MINISTRY DISCUSSION**

How have you contributed to {xxx}'s organisational culture?

What went well this year?

What would you have liked to have done differently?

How do your “significant others” feel about your Ministry?

**Ministry Futures Discussion:** *This is an opportunity for the staff member to discuss their future ministry desires and / or opportunities.*

**SECTION 4 –DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

<b>Ministry Focus Areas</b> <i>(i.e., what are the most important ministry aims or issues going forward.)</i>	<b>Development Goals</b> <i>(i.e., what key skill or area do you need to develop to be more effective in this Ministry Focus Area.)</i>	<b>Actions – How will objective me achieved, and by when?</b> <i>(e.g., training, experience with new tasks, mentoring etc.)</i>

**SECTION 5 – TWO WAY FEEDBACK**

*How can your manager better support you in your role?*

*What would you differently if you were the Senior Minister?*

*Would you like to provide any constructive feedback that might enhance the operations or professional working relationships in our church?*

**SECTION 6 – SIGNATURES**

Both staff member and manager agree that this Performance Review & Development document reflects the discussions held.

This document will be filed securely and treated with confidentiality (as appropriate)

Staff Member’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Manager’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Property priorities to progress Indigenous ministry 22/22 Indigenous Ministry in the Diocese of Sydney

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

## Key Points

- By Resolution 22/22, the Synod requested a report back in 2023 with proposals to identify suitable property priorities to progress Indigenous ministry, along with the identified funding sources, for inclusion in the overall ministry infrastructure planning for the Diocese.
- The Anglican Church Growth Corporation (**ACGC**) continues to consult with the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee (**SAIPMC**) to finalise characteristics and sizes of land needed.
- Additionally, ACGC is working with SAIPMC on a solution to enable ministry to continue on the existing Tregear site, potentially freeing up funds to be diverted to the Huskisson area for Indigenous ministry.
- \$2 Million in funds has been set aside for the purchase and development of property for use in Indigenous ministry.

## Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to report progress on Synod resolution 22/22.

## Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.

## Background

3. By Resolution 22/22, the Synod, among other things –
  - (a) noting the importance of ongoing and appropriate capital support for Indigenous ministry in the Diocese in order to purchase further suitable properties in the future, requested the Standing Committee to –
    - (i) consider and prioritise the needs of the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee (**SAIPMC**) in the allocation of funds for purchase of properties for new ministry infrastructure, and
    - (ii) report back to Synod in September 2023 with proposals to identify suitable property priorities to progress Indigenous ministry, along with the identified funding sources, for inclusion in the overall ministry infrastructure planning for the Diocese.
4. This request was referred to the Anglican Church Growth Corporation (**ACGC**) in consultation with the SAIPMC.
5. Accordingly, the following actions were included in ACGC's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan –
  - (a) undertake a needs analysis with SAIPMC to better understand the characteristics and size of land needed and the building requirements,
  - (b) purchase land in the vicinity of Huskisson for Indigenous ministry purposes, and
  - (c) undertake a feasibility study for provision of land and built form in the Mount Druitt/Tregear area suitable for Indigenous ministries.
6. Progress against these actions is reported on a monthly basis to the ACGC Board.

7. In November 2022, the Standing Committee passed an ordinance promoted by the Parish of Church Hill that transferred \$2,000,000 from its additional distributions from the 1 York Street lease to the ACGC, “towards the purchase and development of property for use in Indigenous ministry with not more than \$1,000,000 to be spent on any given property”. We are grateful for the generosity of the parish for this support for indigenous ministry.
8. A workshop was facilitated by the ACGC CEO with SAIPMC members in April 2023 to commence the needs analysis and to develop ideas and priorities to assist in targeting land purchases in the vicinity of Huskisson and Tregear.
9. The workshop did not result in any definitive criteria with respect to characteristics and size of land. It was determined that further consideration was required by SAIPMC members.
10. The workshop did establish that if security and safety issues associated with an adjacent laneway to the Tregear property were able to be solved, retaining and refurbishing the Tregear site would be preferred to relocating somewhere else.
11. As a result, ACGC has undertaken investigations to prepare a proposal to take to Council to close the laneway based on security and safety issues. Further details of the frequency and severity of the security/safety issues are required from the SAIPMC before the proposal can be presented to Council.
12. The above has implications for the purchase of land in the vicinity of Huskisson. If funds are not required to purchase land in the vicinity of Tregear, then with the endorsement of the Standing Committee these funds could be used partially to refurbish the Tregear church and rectory to acceptable levels with the remaining funds diverted to land purchase in the Huskisson area.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

## Recommendations from the Education Committee

### 28/22 Diocesan support for the development of missional leaders and excellent educators in Anglican Schools

### 29/22 Request to appoint a diocesan educational advisor

### 30/22 Establishment of an Education Committee

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

#### Key Points

- This report recognises that communication within the Diocese, especially between the Synod and our network of Anglican Schools, can be improved.
- Anglican Schools represent one of our largest mission fields. Synod works in fellowship with 40 schools in the Diocese of Sydney that collectively educate over 43,000 students, and employ over 5,900 Full-Time Equivalent staff.
- Suggested changes will provide opportunities for the Synod to demonstrate its fellowship with schools in concrete and effective ways.
- There are immediate practical steps that can be taken at no cost, as well as some more challenging opportunities that will require further thought and funding.

#### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to –
  - (a) provide responses to a number of Synod resolutions made in relation to Anglican Schools, and Anglican education, and
  - (b) to expose some of the current issues of concern in Anglican education in the Diocese.

#### Recommendation

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report 'Recommendations from the Education Committee' –
  - (a) acknowledge and thank Anglican Schools for their work as partners in the mission and ministry of the Diocese,
  - (b) request the draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education be presented to School Principals for their consideration and comment, including at the next Ascension Day meeting of Principals, with a view to adoption as a policy of the Synod in 2024, and
  - (c) encourage participation in mentoring, professional development and networking through diocesan associations and professional bodies.
4. Synod request –
  - (a) the Archbishop to consider appointing a suitably qualified education advisor to support his advocacy on behalf of Anglican Schools and to assist the Synod and schools to form an effective partnership towards their shared ministry goals, and
  - (b) the Standing Committee to consider ways to fund such a role.
5. Synod recommend that the Standing Committee –
  - (a) request SDS to include instructional training that provides contextual information about the Diocese and its structures in conjunction with SDS-supported AICD governance courses, and also requests including the offering of this training or an alternative version to diocesan school staff (possibly using a similar online platform as is currently operating for safe ministry training),

- (b) request the education advisor to report to the Standing Committee on the creation of tertiary training programs for school chaplains, assistant chaplains, and Christian Studies teachers, including the development of a sample K-12 Christian Studies curriculum,
- (c) request Youthworks to develop training units to support the teaching of the Bible in primary schools, and distinctive Christian teaching, and
- (d) consider ways to fund such requests.

## **Background**

- 6. On 17 October 2022 the Standing Committee, having noted Synod resolutions 28/22, 29/22, and 30/22, appointed an Education Committee to address the requests of these resolutions, comprising Bishop Chris Edwards, Dr Jean Ashton, Mrs Jude Douglas, Dr Rahmi Jackson, the Rev Dr Michael Jensen, Dr Kaye Chalwell, Dr Wendy Moran, the Rev Dr Gavin Perkins, Canon Craig Roberts, and the Rev Peter Tong, to elect a Chair from amongst its members and with the power to co-opt.
- 7. The Education Committee met on the following occasions: 20 December 2022, 18 January 2023, 8 March 2023, 4 April 2023, and 8 May 2023. The Education Committee elected Bishop Chris Edwards as Chair, and the Rev Dr Michael Jensen as Deputy Chair.
- 8. Given the number of Anglican Schools, the number of staff schools employ, and the fact that they have enrolled over forty three thousand students - each with approximately 1,400 hours of face-to-face instruction each year – it is vital that Synod gives attention to this significant part of the Diocese’s mission. The Synod plays a significant role in the election of governors in most of the Anglican Schools in the Diocese of Sydney.
- 9. These schools work in partnership, together with the Diocese, towards “the great biblical goal of presenting people mature in Christ” by engaging each generation with the gospel and encompassing the “development of personal knowledge, and understanding, skills, character and virtues” (Diocesan Policy Statement on Education) and to present “the whole curriculum within a Christian worldview founded on the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” with a distinctive Christian Studies curriculum (*Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016*).
- 10. In current times, these schools operate in complex, ever changing social and political landscapes, where what was once clear and uncontroversial is now unclear and controversial. Schools are also facing unprecedented difficulties in recruiting and retaining quality teachers and leaders who are Christians. As long ago as 2009, Archbishop Peter Jensen stated that “our Diocese is guilty of neglect when it comes to its schools and indeed to the issues involved with education generally.”
- 11. Urgent tangible action from Synod is needed to support the mission and ministry of Anglican Schools in the Diocese.

## **Discussion**

### **30/22 Establishment of an Education Committee**

- 12. The text of resolution 30/22 is as follows –

“In light of the termination of EdComm and in the absence of any diocesan body to undertake the important work of resourcing and advocacy for and oversight of education in the Diocese, this Synod requests the Standing Committee to establish a suitably qualified committee to bring to the next Synod –

- (a) a clear diocesan statement on what Reformed Anglican Education is,
- (b) a report on what initial and ongoing training in the fundamentals of Anglican Education is currently available for school governors,
- (c) recommendations for a specific program for school chaplains and Religious Education teachers, and



- (d) recommendations for ongoing in-service programs on the application of Christian principles to education as a requisite for practising teachers (which may form part of teacher registration).”

13. The Education Committee devoted a significant portion of its time developing a draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education. This was in response to the Synod request, and an acknowledgement that deep theological reflection is required. The draft statement is found in Appendix 1 to this report, and is the foundation upon which the Committee considered the other components of the Synod resolution, as found below.

***30/22(a) a clear diocesan statement on what Reformed Anglican Education is***

14. The answer to this question is already formed within Sydney Anglican documents such as: The Diocesan Policy Statement on Education, and the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016*, and publications such as *New Perspectives on Anglican Education (2011)*. The attached statement (Appendix 1) seeks to summarise these and define a Reformed Anglican Education by its theology and practices.

***30/22(b) a report on what initial and ongoing training in the fundamentals of Anglican Education is currently available for school governors***

15. All ‘responsible persons’ in a school are required by NSW Educational Standards Authority (**NESA**) to undertake initial and ongoing governance training; however, the training that is currently offered focuses (appropriately) on such areas as compliance and risk, child protection, strategic thinking and board effectiveness, to name a few. There simply is no systemic initial or ongoing training in the fundamentals of Anglican Education available for school governors.

16. Developing a NESA-Approved course in the fundamentals of Reformed Anglican Education, that would contribute towards requisite hours of governance training, would be a valuable outcome. It would further incentivise participation for existing governors and contribute to their triennial training obligations.

17. While a significant amount of training is provided for school governors, very little, if any, of it is focused on Reformed Anglican Education. It needs to be understood that policies, ordinances and guidelines are currently the principal means by which the Diocese communicates with schools. There is an expectation of compliance, but little or no assistance to school leaders in understanding their obligations.

18. A survey of school governors, conducted by the Anglican Schools Corporation, reinforced that a significant proportion of our schools are not doing what would be the minimum required to ensure school governors, especially alumni/community representatives, are trained adequately in the Christian ministry, character and purposes of their school.

19. There is an urgent need to provide more, and strengthen what is already provided, with Synod providing some (tailored) training modules for each diocesan school as part of an induction of new school governors. This could also expand beyond provision to new school governors on appointment, to include Principals and members of school executive teams.

*Suggestions for induction and ongoing training*

20. Induction programs and training for governors should identify and highlight the basis for the Christian character of each school found in the relevant constituting ordinance. For instance, one school’s ordinance stipulates that it is to be a school “in which the teaching shall be throughout in accordance with the principles of the Church of England” and similar phrases occur in other relevant ordinances.

21. The goal should be to ensure that each school governor has a deep understanding of what it means for them to support and strengthen the Christian ethos of the school, and the governance structures of the Diocese. Ongoing programs and training should specifically equip the governing body of each school to better deal with issues around the key Christian/societal pressure points in sensitive and thoughtful ways.

**30/22(c) recommendations for a specific program for school chaplains and 'Christian Studies' teachers**

*Current situation*

22. As is the case with school governors, no specific training program currently exists for school chaplains or Christian Studies teachers.
23. There is no specific pathway into School Chaplaincy and 'Christian Studies' in Anglican Schools in the Diocese. Moore College, Youthworks, and other institutes provide appropriate theological training but no specific chaplaincy or Christian Studies teaching training. The formation of the Youthworks Centre for Christian Education is a welcome development, but for now this means that the level of theological training, teacher qualification, ministry or pastoral experience varies widely across Diocesan Schools. Specific programs to support, train and develop those engaged in School ministry need to take into account the variable starting points of those engaged in these ministries.

*Youthworks Centre for Christian Education*

24. Youthworks College has launched the Centre for Christian Education with the aim of "deepening the gospel expertise of Christians in the teaching profession", as well as creating a "pathway for schools and churches to raise up more Christians for the teaching profession." The Diploma of Theology incorporating work placement in a school presents a useful model.
25. The Diploma of Theology for Christian teachers includes Christian Doctrine as well as Christian Ethics, Sexuality & Identity, and Formative Christian Teaching, and is designed for teachers to complete either before, during or after their formal teaching qualifications. The flexible format of the course allows for existing teachers to complete the 8 units through 3x 2-day blocks on a Friday and Saturday each semester.
26. This course would provide a thorough theological foundation and reflection to inform both practice and cultural engagement within Anglican Schools.

*Recommendations*

27. The Anglican School context is unique. While there are parallels to parish ministry, university ministry, cross-cultural mission, or other forms of chaplaincy, the context of ministry in Anglican Schools in 2023 is unique. Several factors about these Schools highlight the need for specific training for those who work and minister in them –
  - (a) An exemplary standard of teaching and godly conduct is required of Christian teachers and Chaplains because of the vulnerable age of children at school.
  - (b) The intersection of Christian principles and secular thinking creates tension which needs to be navigated faithfully, wisely and sensitively.
  - (c) Each school carries cultural norms and expectations that need to be understood for effective ministry to take place. The dynamic between compulsory and voluntary ministry settings within a school impacts what biblical messages can be emphasised.
  - (d) The practical limitations of timetables and term dates impact the format of ongoing professional development. Every school is different and has a different rhythm and cadence. Hence it is very difficult, for example, to find a consistent time for training across multiple institutions.
28. Identifying, recruiting and developing future Chaplains is also a challenge.
29. In light of the large responsibility that the Bible gives to teachers of the Bible (James 3:1, 1 Timothy 3, 2 Timothy 2:15) and the integral importance of these roles to a school's ministry and *raison d'être*, it is suggested that schools recognise the importance of these roles by prioritising the appointment of staff to these roles with significant training for the role, and facilitate on-going professional development and networking for staff in these roles.

30. The following two strategies are recommended as specific programs for school chaplains and Christian Studies teachers. A third strategy, for an Anglican Schools Executive Leadership program, is outlined in our response to Synod resolution 28/22, below.

*Strategy 1: Ensuring appropriate qualifications are available and delivered for roles with responsibility for teaching the Bible to the school community*

31. It is noted that the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016* already requires someone appointed to a Chaplain role to have a qualification in theology “commensurate with the position to which they are appointed that is acceptable to the Archbishop” and that this requirement is largely equivalent to the current requirements for practising teachers (generally four years of tertiary training). It is recommended that these requirements are extended to the role of Christian Studies teacher (or equivalent title). The Table in Appendix 2 sets out the recommended qualifications necessary to equip staff for the common variations of these roles, in addition to appropriate educational qualifications.
32. In making this recommendation it is recognised that –
- (a) a great variety of staff are already appointed to these roles without this level of training,
  - (b) the recommended elective units do not currently exist, and
  - (c) the current staffing, administrative and financial barriers and other burdens on schools and teachers makes widescale adoption of this recommendation very difficult.
33. Nonetheless, it is strongly suggested that the Synod works in partnership with schools to remove and reduce these barriers and increase the training supports and requirements of these roles. Specifically, it is recommended that –
- (a) schools preferentially appoint staff with this training to these positions,
  - (b) when staffing pressures result in the appointment of a person without these qualifications (including currently appointed staff), that the school facilitates and supports the staff member to complete this training within a reasonable timeframe to ensure they are effectively supported in their important role,
  - (c) these elective units be developed urgently by tertiary providers, particularly the Centre for Christian Education, and
  - (d) every step possible is taken to make the delivery of the one-year and three-year theology degrees appropriately flexible and financially feasible to be completed by staff working in full-time roles.
34. A shared curriculum for Christian Studies K-12 does not exist and this forms a significant barrier for collaboration and cross-school support. It is therefore recommended that a sample K-12 Christian Studies curriculum be developed by a collaboration between Youthworks Centre for Christian Education and experienced teachers of Christian Studies. It is recommended that the sample curriculum then be integrated into the Christian Studies method elective unit(s). It is noted that the needs of a K-12 Christian Studies curriculum to be delivered within Reformed Anglican Schools will have different requirements and standards to the SRE program delivered within public schools.

*Strategy 2: Mentoring, professional development and networking programs for the teaching of the Bible in an Anglican School setting*

35. It is recommended that a program of partnership be provided between the school, its local parishes and ministers and other chaplains and teachers across local schools. This strategy is modelled on the Ministry Training and Development (**MTD**) program which exists to provide ministry training and support for those in the first three years of ministry after ordination.<sup>1</sup> The MTD program works in partnership with rectors to “further integrate the participants’ theological understanding with their personal life and ministry practice.” There is a focus on personal formation and the competencies required in pastoral ministry during the early formative years. The use of ministry professionals and mentors are key facets of the program and the formation of diocesan fellowship across parishes is a highly positive outcome.

---

<sup>1</sup> [MD Program – Ministry Training & Development \(mtd.org.au\)](http://mtd.org.au)

36. A program either following the MTD model or being a sub-set of MTD could be ideal for the school setting, especially with the focus on skill based development, personal reflection and practical and spiritual mentoring. For those who work in small Chaplaincy teams, the fellowship developed across Schools could provide life-long ministry partnerships. The Sydney Anglican Schools Ministry Association (**SASMA**<sup>2</sup>) is a logical point for networking in this context.
37. In addition to the question of a specific program for school chaplains, a broader range of issues related to current school chaplaincy require further consideration (such as by the proposed education advisor) –
- (a) more detailed guidelines regarding what chaplains are actually required to do,
  - (b) the extent to which schools understand the place of the chaplain as a church worker,
  - (c) issues related to conforming to *Faithfulness in Service*,
  - (d) having an Archbishop's licence,
  - (e) the greatly varying status of the Chaplain in different schools,
  - (f) the role of the local Rector as Chaplain in schools that are not extra-parochial,
  - (g) specific requirements of educational and theological training,
  - (h) what is meant by pastoral responsibility to the school community,
  - (i) the Synod relationship being framed as *offering assistance* as opposed to *imposing requirements*, and
  - (j) the way in which the chaplain 'represents' the Diocese in their school community.

**30/22(d) recommendations for ongoing in-service programs on the application of Christian principles to education as a requisite for practising teachers (which may form part of teacher registration).**

38. The important role that all Christian teachers play in contributing to the ministry of the school is recognised, as they role-model Christian character, explore a Biblical world view of their academic subject areas, deliver classroom devotions, engage with a variety of non-Christian world views embedded in educational resources and syllabi, engage with supporting families with complex social issues, care of vulnerable people, apologetics as related to their subject areas, i.e., they seek to deliver an education transformed by Biblical truths.
39. With the closure of the Anglican Education Commission, the Synod does not currently provide any training or support for the application of Christian principles for practising teachers. Therefore there exists a great need for such training to exist and be available in flexible and financially viable formats. The work of the Christian teacher, to provide an education transformed by the Christian world view, requires academic training as well as professional development, mentoring, and networking. It is suggested therefore that the following strategies be adopted –
- (a) in recognition that diploma-level courses are not feasible for all Christian teachers to be able to complete, it is recommended that the preferred academic training to support all Christian teachers be formed as a Preliminary Theological Certificate (**PTC**) elective course on Christian teaching, to be written and delivered within the existing PTC course structure,
  - (b) that schools provide support for teachers to complete training units (including theology units and Christian teaching units),
  - (c) that schools are encouraged to appoint positions of leadership to develop and champion distinctive Christian teaching, mentoring teachers within the school and contributing to inter-school networks to develop and promote initiatives for improving Christian teaching,
  - (d) that such leaders be encouraged and supported to undertake training or research to deepen their understanding of Christian teaching, such as the diploma offered by the Centre for Christian Education or the Master of Education from the National Institute for Christian Education, and
  - (e) the formation of a network or association for Christian teachers linked to the Centre for Christian Education to facilitate professional development, conferences, research and mentoring partnerships.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sasma.asn.au/>

40. Notwithstanding the suggested training strategies above, it is recognised that the current chronic teacher shortage is creating difficulties when it comes to recruiting qualified teachers, especially in specific subject areas. In regional schools, recruiting in almost all subject areas is very difficult. Caution should therefore be given to placing any additional requirements on suitably qualified teachers. Such a step may well result in continued unfilled vacancies in Anglican Schools as potential applicants seek less restrictive opportunities in other Christian, independent, or government schools.
41. In response to the wording of Resolution 30/22, it is noted that teacher registration is not required in NSW, rather, teachers are accredited by the NESA according to their pre-service teacher qualifications. Accordingly, the word “registration” has been interpreted as if “accreditation” was meant. Nonetheless, extra requirements as part of accreditation cannot be added by employers.
42. There was a strong feeling among some members of the Education Committee that it is unreasonable to expect in-service Christian education programs to be mandatory for teachers in Anglican Schools. Other members believe that, if people are going to work in our schools, then their induction could involve in-service and professional development focus areas such as, Reformed Anglican Education. The Education Committee agreed caution should be given against issuing “decrees” which cannot be enforced or monitored.
43. The resolution requested a focus on in-service programs. An agreed understanding of what is meant by the “application of Christian principles” to education is an essential starting point for considering ongoing in-service programs. The draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education (Appendix 1) seeks to address this foundational issue.
44. It should also be noted that, in line with respected contemporary professional learning practices, the use of in-service programs (only) for effective professional development is no longer considered to be the best approach. While programs and more formalised learning were the primary focus of present consideration, other forms of learning were also considered that could be more effective. Furthermore, if a 10-hour module could be developed (at a price teachers could afford), then an understanding of “Christian Principles” may contribute towards a Proficient Teacher’s Elective Professional Development requirements.
45. There are a range of Anglican Schools where factors such as school councils, prevailing cultures and Principal perspectives influence the success of any professional development opportunity for staff. It can never be a one-size-fits-all. Therefore, a range of strategies and offerings facilitating involvement at a collective and individual level is necessary. To assist teachers in Anglican Schools to develop skills in applying evangelical Christian principles to education, a ‘scattergun’ approach (i.e. by considering many different possibilities) is proposed to, through God’s providence, meet teachers where they are at.
46. The difference between **offering** ongoing in-service programs to Anglican School staff focusing on the application of Christian principles and **encouraging** school staff to engage with these programs was considered. Specifically, consideration was given to the supportive and hindering factors to both offering and encouraging school staff to engage with ongoing in-service programs or professional learning of some nature.
47. Ultimately, a higher education institution may need to be established to provide a range of courses for all school leaders (including chaplains and school governors) and teachers providing clear direction in, and definition to, Reformed Anglican Education. Avenues for higher degree research would need to be developed to enable exploration of Christian pedagogy within a Reformed Anglican perspective.
48. This is a solution that is bold and courageous and would provide the very opportunities we seek to formalise Reformed Anglican pedagogy and provide the resources and training needed. This higher education institution, whether established *de novo* or growing out of existing institutions, could start by offering formal and informal courses for preservice teachers, established teachers, aspiring school leaders, chaplains and school governors. It could be an advocate for Reformed Anglican Education and could expand over time to encompass a range of disciplines.
49. An informal group should be established under the guidance of the suitably qualified education advisor to continue the conversation about a potential Anglican tertiary institution, noting that it is a long-term, aspirational goal, and may grow organically out of an existing institution such as the Centre

for Christian Education, Moore College, or an existing school, perhaps through the formation of a University College.

50. The education advisor should identify and promote courses that support Christian pedagogy. For example, the Youthworks in-service one year Diploma of Theology, which is referenced above as a recommendation for Chaplains and Christian Studies teachers. The Diploma would also be suitable for any teacher interested in developing their Christian pedagogy. Studying with staff from a variety of Anglican Schools would also foster a culture of collaboration.
51. It is important to foster a culture of collaboration between Anglican Schools to share exemplars of Christian pedagogy. Courses may also be identified from higher education institutions that have been 'vetted' for alignment with Reformed Anglican perspectives, and a suitably qualified education advisor may investigate partnership with an established university willing to offer a subject in Christian teaching, or willing to do cross-institutional credit. Options to reduce participation costs could also be investigated, such as Commonwealth Supported Places.
52. Five key approaches and sample strategies have been identified that would assist in supporting school staff to teach using a Reformed Anglican pedagogy, regardless of context. The appointment of a suitably qualified education advisor would facilitate the promotion of these strategies to Anglican Schools.
  - (a) Define Reformed Anglican pedagogy and articulate high-level practices –
    - (i) Survey educators in Anglican Schools about: what they think teaching Christianly is; their views on the distinction between Christian education and Reformed Anglican education; to what extent they feel they are teaching Christianly; the support or resources they need to improve.
    - (ii) Survey students about the degree to which they think that they have experienced a distinctive teaching style that is Christian.
    - (iii) Fund a scholarship (or find organisations who will) for researchers to undertake higher degree research in this area.
    - (iv) Write a statement (no more than a page, or two at most) defining what it is to teach using a Reformed Anglican pedagogy to assist teachers to understand the ethos of the school and what is required of them. This would be based on the draft statement of Reformed Anglican education, once it is finalised, and adopted by the Synod.
  - (b) Offer formal and informal development opportunities –
    - (i) Promote courses like the Youthworks in-service one year Diploma of Theology (part time mode needs to be readily available and delivered asynchronously).
    - (ii) Develop a menu of courses available from higher education institutions that have been 'vetted' for alignment with Reformed Anglican perspectives. Where possible, show how combinations of subjects might lead to micro-credentialing or full diplomas, and master degrees.
    - (iii) Partner with an established university willing to offer a subject in Christian teaching or cross-institutional credit. University courses in education are usually viewed in a favourable light with regards to NESA accreditation.
    - (iv) Establish a platform to act as a broker for sourcing providers of Christian education training, without necessarily trying to be a provider.
  - (c) Model exemplars in a variety of contexts for celebration and inspiration –
    - (i) Foster a culture of collaboration through inter school conferences where schools share their successes in developing a strong Christian pedagogy. It might need incentives via awards and conference dinner highlights with special guest speakers.
    - (ii) Make available twilight sessions where Anglican teachers, emerging leaders and leaders can share ideas and listen to key speakers. These can be recorded and offered to those not able to physically attend.
  - (d) Provide opportunities for teachers and school leaders to explore and unpack according to their own context –
    - (i) Consider offering an online introductory course (maybe ½ day's worth) for teachers who are not Christian / Anglican to assist them in understanding what Reformed Anglican Education is about, based on the draft statement of Reformed Anglican education. It could even be a *Christianity Explored* kind of course.

- (ii) Develop a model of mentorship that schools can adopt which facilitates expert Christian pedagogists who can work with teachers who are unsure / unclear how to teach Christianly in their subject area / stage.
- (e) Stimulate dialogue via a forum/platform which houses quality research and links to useful resources and courses –
  - (i) Establish a platform that presents a range of resources e.g. books, articles, podcasts, videos that teachers and leaders can access in their own time.

## 28/22 Diocesan support for the development of missional leaders and excellent educators in Anglican Schools

53. The text of resolution 28/22 is as follows –

“Acknowledging the enormous missional task before us, the increasing population of our Diocese, and the need for even more schools in the coming generations, Synod requests the Standing Committee to prepare a report for the next Synod, outlining the ways the Diocese can support the recruitment and development of outstanding Christian missional leaders who are excellent educators.”

54. Diocesan programs to support the recruitment and development of outstanding Christian missional leaders who are excellent educators do not currently exist.

### *Anglican Schools Executive Leadership program*

55. The skills required for executive leadership in the Anglican School setting build upon the formation described above for all teachers, yet require a greater degree of expertise and specific training. The fact that the Association of Independent Schools (**AIS**) NSW<sup>3</sup> runs several executive leadership courses highlights the acknowledged need for specific training in executive school leadership. The strength of AIS courses for Anglican Schools is their real-world rigour, though the drawback is that they do not grapple with the specifics of the Anglican context nor navigating theological and spiritual leadership in this setting.
56. The mentoring and networking strategies outlined in paragraphs 35-37 (above, specifically for Chaplains and Christian Studies teachers) seek to meet the need for preparing men and women to lead Christian ministries and other aspects of School life within the context of Sydney Anglican Schools. Just as the Presbyterian program sits within MTD, a similar model could be offered where candidates indicate they are ready to prepare for leadership roles within Schools. The use of mentors, intensives, psychometric testing and partnership with School Principals could be adapted for the school context.
57. The Committee notes that as effective training, mentoring and networks for the development of executive leaders in schools is the responsibility of the Principals, and executive leadership program such as that outlined above could come under the oversight of an organisation such as Sydney Anglican Schools Heads Association (**SASHA**).

## 29/22 Request to appoint a diocesan educational advisor

58. The text of resolution 29/22 is as follows –

“This Synod requests the Standing Committee to take whatever steps may be necessary to ensure the appointment of a suitable person who is qualified in –

- (a) educational philosophy,
- (b) educational practice, and
- (c) educational leadership,

to advise and represent the Diocese in matters relating to education and to provide annual reports to the Synod on the status of Anglican Education in the Diocese.”

---

<sup>3</sup> [AISNSW](#)

59. Given the importance of this role, the Standing Committee should consider ways to fund a diocesan education advisor. The Standing Committee should also consider ways to fund the development of the recommended courses and elective units, and other initiatives recommended in this report.
60. The education advisor will need to have credibility as an education researcher and school advocate, understand the school environment, work collaboratively with schools, and be funded in a way different to the EdComm model. The brief will be to support the Diocese and its schools to work collaboratively to deliver an effective Reformed Anglican Education.
61. The education advisor should work collaboratively with existing diocesan associations to focus on assisting schools to deliver Reformed Anglican Education, at least partly in response to areas of need identified by the schools themselves.
62. Consultation with established organisations (such as SASMA, or SASHA) will assist in testing the willingness of schools to partner in specific initiatives and assist the diocesan educational advisor and association where best to direct their relational energy. Communication with schools and related organisations will be crucial.
63. Synod would continue to be the body with the authority to set requirements (e.g. by altering ordinances) and the advisor report to Synod, with no delegated authority.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023



## Draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education

1. **In theology**, a Reformed Anglican Education adheres to the evangelical mission and doctrines of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. The mission of Reformed Anglican Education is synonymous with all Christian mission, the great commission in Matthew 28:19-20. The proclamation of the gospel therefore remains of pre-eminent importance. A Reformed Anglican Education provides the opportunity to engage each generation in the gospel, enabling young people to make an informed choice at the time when they make the majority of their most significant decisions about their lives.
2. For those who through the gracious activity of the Holy Spirit respond in repentance to the gospel, a Reformed Anglican Education must help connect them to their local Anglican church and in partnership support the development of mature disciples of Christ. This is described in the Diocesan Policy Statement on Education: *“The great biblical goal of presenting people mature in Christ (Col 1:28) encompasses the whole of life in every facet. The Christian life is the life of discipleship lived under the lordship of Christ through the authority of God’s word, which informs and moulds our thinking and directs our approach to God, others and the world that God has made. It encompasses the development of personal knowledge and understanding, skills, character and virtues.”*
3. The provision of Reformed Anglican Education in a post-Christian society is also a means to positively impact the lives and culture of non-Christians in the local community. We are in effect “exiles scattered” (1 Peter 1:1) amongst a non-Christian culture. Reformed Anglican Education therefore has a role in our community to be the ‘salt’ and the ‘light’ (Matthew 5:13-16). With wisdom and discernment, Reformed Anglican Education leads and shares eagerly in endeavours to serve others and to do good in society (Galatians 6:9-10; Titus 2:7-8) so that others may see and glorify God (Matthew 5:16), which cannot be achieved in abstraction from the gospel.
4. **In practice**, Reformed Anglican Education should have the following distinctive elements –
  - (a) A holistic approach to providing excellent education that is Christ-centred, student-focused and biblically founded, promoting the gospel of Christ and its importance for everyone.
    - (i) Providing a holistic and excellent education is a good goal that all schools share. However, the terms holistic and excellent will be redefined for Reformed Anglican Education.
    - (ii) Excellence is redefined away from an elitist perspective, where only high achievement is celebrated and valued. Rather in Reformed Anglican Education every student’s learning is valuable. There is therefore a specific focus on excelling at teaching students from diverse backgrounds and cultures and meeting additional needs of students, ensuring that for each student their learning pathway is achievable, appropriately challenging, and meaningful.
    - (iii) Holistic is also redefined as more than just a balanced development of academics, wellbeing, creative arts, performing arts, sport, service and character. Re-shaping this instead to have the goal of developing students in a manner to present them as mature disciples of Christ.
  - (b) The delivery of education transformed by a Christian worldview.
    - (i) “Christian Education” is defined as “the presentation of the whole curriculum within a Christian worldview founded on the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” by the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016*. Thus, teachers of Reformed Anglican Education take opportunities to present how the Christian worldview transforms their understanding. In this manner, students are provided with a cohesive education where the importance of biblical understanding is made clear in all areas so that God’s true and good design may be known and of benefit to all.
    - (ii) Increasingly sophisticated competing paradigms are pervasive and are being overtly and subliminally driven into the minds of people through every media possible. Christian

education therefore seeks to equip and guide students to see God's wisdom in His design for the world, that they may benefit from the blessing of following His design. Further, that through an understanding of the Gospel and the Bible, that they may find the courage to take hold of the gospel and live life through Christ. The emphasis is explicitly not indoctrination<sup>1</sup>, which demands students accept and do not think; rather a central goal is enabling students' informed critical thinking by comparing Biblical perspectives and the Gospel message to other perspectives and messages. In this manner students learn that God's design is distinct from, and better than, other competing beliefs and worldviews.

- (c) The delivery of an academic Christian Studies course across all years.
- (i) The Holy Spirit uses the word of God as the "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17) and it is only through His work that some may be saved. The teaching of the Bible is able to bring wisdom, salvation, maturity, sanctification and equip God's elect for their good work (2 Timothy, 3:15-17). Therefore, the teaching of the Bible is of central importance to the mission of Reformed Anglican Education.
  - (ii) The direct teaching of the Bible includes the entire Biblical text with a focus on its connection together as one big story. In Christian Studies, students will learn how to read the text and interpret the author's intended meaning based on context, determine applications and implications from the text, and understand the history, geography, genre, Biblical context, and connections to archaeological findings from the text. It is important to maintain the teaching of the Bible to a similar depth and quality of other academic studies so that students may not dismiss the study of the Bible, or the Christian faith, as lacking credibility, academic merit, or value.
- (d) Providing effective pastoral care for staff and students.
- (i) Reformed Anglican Education is not a volume of knowledge dictated to pupils, indeed, "knowledge puffs up while love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8:1). It is instead an approach to education that responds to the inherent value of people (Lamentations 4:2) and the destructive impact of false teaching (2 Peter 2:1). While providing quality Christian and Biblical education is a necessary component to this, it is important not to make the mistake of the priest and Levite from the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). If we are to teach students the truth of their inherent value and dignity as co-image bearers, we must demonstrate this in how we love and care for them and their families (e.g., James 2:14-17).
- (e) Upholding the diaconal ministry of Anglican Schools through appropriate appointment and professional development of school governors, leaders, teachers and other employees.
- (i) The work of Reformed Anglican Schools, founded by the Anglican Church, is a targeted mission to reach and educate a large population that may otherwise not be engaged in the Anglican Church. Teachers and leaders in these schools therefore have a responsibility to teach the Bible to this population and provide effective pastoral care for them. The Bible warns us of the greater responsibility of Biblical teachers and leaders (James 3:1, 1 Timothy 3) and the importance of being trained in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 2:15). Therefore, it is reasonable to adopt these Biblical principles when appointing people to leadership and Christian teaching positions.
  - (ii) As not all staff in Anglican Schools come with sufficient knowledge of the Bible (or Christian faith), there is an urgent need for ongoing teaching of the Bible to staff as well as to students. It is therefore the responsibility of Synod to work in partnership with schools to support and equip staff with theological advice and training sufficient to carry out their roles and contribute to the school's ministry.
  - (iii) The Scriptures remain the ultimate source of authority for decisions that the school must make. Therefore, the Bible should be well understood by leadership staff, ensuring all

---

<sup>1</sup> Collier, J. (2013) Models of Christian education. *TEACH Journal of Christian Education*, 7(1), 4-7.

decisions and actions of the school are Biblically sound. There is also significant benefit for the schools as they are informed and supported by the combined and collaborative wisdom of the Church leadership, including the Synod.

- (f) Appointing Chaplains to minister to the school community in partnership with local churches.
  - (i) Reformed Anglican Schools commonly appoint suitably trained Chaplains to minister in the school community. The specific roles of the chaplain are guided by the needs of each school's community and their own set of strengths and abilities. Some common aspects of their roles include: the exhortation of the Gospel of Christ through chapels and devotions, ministry of Christian groups, nurturing individual's faith, pastoral care, teaching of Christian Studies, theological advice, recruitment into ministry and mission, school service programs, and theological development for staff.
  - (ii) The chaplain's role has a focus of seeking to encourage students, staff and families to active discipleship through membership in their local church, rather than to see the school or chapel as an alternative to church. See also the treatment of section (c) of the Synod resolution, below, on the role of Chaplains.
- (g) Working in partnership between Anglican and other organisations to develop, promote, research, and advocate for the advancement of Christian educational practices.
  - (i) Reformed Anglican Schools carry the name and reputation of Christ, not just of Anglicanism or a particular school. Therefore, there is a responsibility for all in governance and leadership to be faithful stewards of the resources God has given and utilise these for the furtherance of the ministry and mission of Christ in schools. This includes the collaborative development, research and sharing of educational practices, the promotion and advocacy of these and support for training in them.

**Table – Recommended training requirements for certain roles**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Load</b>	<b>Training recommended</b>	<b>Elective units recommended</b>
Any leadership or executive chaplaincy role	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Chaplain	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Chaplain	Part-Time	One-year theology degree (e.g. Dip Th. or Dip B Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Assistant Chaplain	Full-Time or Part-time	One-year theology degree (e.g. Dip Th. or Dip B Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Any leadership of Christian Studies or equivalent role (e.g. Head of Christian Studies, Coordinator of Christian Studies)	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	Christian Studies Teaching method
Christian studies teacher (or equivalent, e.g., Biblical Studies)	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	Christian Studies Teaching method
Christian Studies teacher (or equivalent, e.g., Biblical Studies)	Part-time (whether by appointment or regular timetabling practice)	One-year theology degree (e.g. Dip Th. or Dip B Th.)	Christian Studies Teaching method
Primary school teacher who delivers Christian Studies (or equivalent) to their class	Any	Completion of PTC	Teaching the Bible to children (Primary)

# 6/22 Review of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations

(A report from the Governance Policy Review Committee.)

## Key Points

- In August 2021 the Standing Committee appointed a Governance Policy Review Committee (**GPRC**) to undertake a thorough review of the Synod's *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations* (**Governance Policy**).
- Since the last report to the Synod in 2022, the GPRC has met on ten occasions, undertaken extensive research on a wide variety of matters, and engaged with a significant number of diocesan organisations.
- An Exposure Draft of a revised Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations (**Exposure Draft**), together with a brief covering note (**Explanatory Memorandum**) is attached. Feedback is sought by 31 December 2023.
- Both documents have been shared with schools and organisations, are being shared with churches at Synod (via this report), and will be shared with other entities to which the policy is proposed to apply, for comment and feedback.

## Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an Exposure Draft of a revised Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations (**Exposure Draft**) to the Synod for comment and feedback.

## Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report 'Review of the Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations' –
  - (a) affirm that churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply, in pursuing their individual charitable purpose(s), are partners in our shared ministry, and part of a network collectively seeking to advance the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese while maintaining high standards of governance,
  - (b) confirm the importance of churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply pursuing their individual charitable purpose(s) in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Anglican Church in the Diocese of Sydney,
  - (c) request Synod members, churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply, to review the Exposure Draft and provide feedback to the Governance Policy Review Committee by 31 December 2023, and
  - (d) request that a further revised form of the Governance Policy be brought back to the Synod in 2024 incorporating, as appropriate, comments and feedback from Synod members, and churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply.

## Background

4. At its meeting on 9 August 2021, the Standing Committee agreed to appoint the Governance Policy Review Committee (**GPRC**) to review the Synod's Governance Policy, including –
  - (a) the relationship of that policy with other relevant Diocesan Policies and policy guidelines,
  - (b) the conclusions of the Conformity Report,
  - (c) changes in charity law and regulation since 2014 (including changes to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (**ACNC**) Governance Standards and the introduction of the ACNC External Conduct Standards), and
  - (d) any relevant issues arising from the current debate on religious freedom.

5. Members of the GPRC were appointed by the Standing Committee on 6 September 2021: Bishop Chris Edwards (Chair), Mr Greg Hammond OAM (Deputy Chair), Mrs Stacey Chapman, the Rev Matt Heazlewood, Ms Anne Robinson AM, Dr Laurie Scandrett, Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo, and Mr Robert Wicks.
6. Since the last report to the Synod, the GPRC has met on the following occasions: 24 August 2022, 19 October 2022, 2 November 2022, 7 December 2022, 15 February 2023, 8 March 2023, 5 April 2023, 25 May 2023, 14 June 2023 and 26 July 2023.
7. The Archbishop, in consultation with the GPRC, convened meetings of School Heads and Chairs on 12 October 2022 and 19 July 2023. The GPRC issued a communique on 30 November 2022 summarising the discussion at the first meeting. After the second meeting, the Archbishop provided a copy of the Exposure Draft and the Explanatory Memorandum to School Heads and Chairs on 20 July 2023.
8. From the last report to the Synod in 2022 until the release of the Exposure Draft in July 2023, the GPRC has received informal feedback and formal submissions from, among others, the Dean of Sydney, The King's School, Tara Anglican School for Girls, Abbotsleigh, Abbotsleigh Old Girls' Union, Sydney Church of England Grammar School (SHORE), The Illawarra Grammar School, and Trinity Grammar School. The GPRC has also extensively considered feedback from diocesan organisations provided through the mechanism of governance gap analysis. In May 2023, the GPRC also received a formal submission from the Sydney Anglican Schools Heads Association (**SASHA**).

## **Discussion**

9. Attached is an Explanatory Memorandum (Attachment 1) and the Exposure Draft (Attachment 2). The Exposure Draft considers and implements a range of enhancements to the existing policy, including simplifications, and a broadening of applicability reflected in a tiered approach to governance. The Exposure Draft also highlights a number of areas (including where a departure from the requirements of the current Policy and/or there has been a divergence in the submissions received by the GPRC) about which the GPRC is specifically requesting feedback and comment.
10. The GPRC has undertaken a great deal of research, and consulted widely with diocesan organisations, and the Exposure Draft reflects multiple revisions in Committee as we have reflected on the impact and effectiveness of the existing policy, and how a revised policy might better achieve high standards of governance, ensure governors and leaders are of Christian faith and character and maintain organisational faithfulness. The GPRC is strongly committed to a form of policy that will both ensure governors and leaders will be of Christian faith and character, and be genuinely effective in maintaining organisational faithfulness. This will be achieved through –
  - (a) an improved nomination and selection process (and the GPRC is requesting feedback on how this can be best ensured), and
  - (b) a commitment to pursuing an organisation's charitable purposes in a manner consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.
11. It should not be assumed that the GPRC is recommending the changes set out in the Exposure Draft at this stage, rather the GPRC believes it is appropriate for there to be wide ranging consultation on the issues raised by the changes proposed in the Exposure Draft. Likewise, the Standing Committee has not debated or expressed a view on the matters in the Exposure Draft.
12. The GPRC intends to move separate motions to test the mind of Synod regarding the approach of the Exposure Draft in creating a tiered model of governance, requiring governors and leaders to be of Christian faith and character, and requiring a commitment to maintaining organisational faithfulness.
13. The GPRC anticipates, following feedback from Synod members, churches, schools and organisations to which the policy applies, that it will finalise its recommendations to the Standing Committee in early 2024. It is anticipated that a final form of a new Governance Policy will be brought to Synod in 2024.

For and on behalf of the Committee.

**BISHOP CHRIS EDWARDS**  
**Chair, Governance Policy Review Committee**

14 August 2023

# Revised Diocesan Governance Policy

## Explanatory Memorandum

### Background

1. The Governance Policy Review Committee (**the Committee**) was established by the Standing Committee of the Synod to review the Synod's *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations* ([link](#)). The Synod received an update on the work of the Committee in 2022. The Committee was asked to consider a number of issues, including the relationship of the policy to other diocesan policies and guidelines, changes in law and regulation since 2014, and any relevant issues arising from the current debate on religious freedom.
2. The Committee has received informal feedback and formal submissions relating to the operation of the current policy. While much of the feedback has focused specifically on the Statement of Personal Faith, the Committee's terms of reference from Standing Committee requested a broader approach be taken, and the Committee is proposing a wide range of changes that will result in a *Diocesan Governance Policy* with significant new features.
3. The Exposure Draft has not been endorsed by the Synod or the Standing Committee. It is being circulated by the Committee for the purpose of seeking further feedback and submissions.

### Responding

4. Whilst feedback and submissions on all aspects of the Exposure Draft is sought from Synod members, churches, schools and organisations to which the policy applies, the draft also poses questions and invites feedback on particular issues.
5. Feedback and submissions are requested by **31 December 2023**, and the Committee anticipates finalising its recommendations to the Standing Committee early in 2024. It is proposed that a final form of a new *Diocesan Governance Policy* will be brought to Synod in 2024.
6. Feedback and submissions are requested by 31 December 2023 and should be sent to –  
[diocesansecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:diocesansecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au)
7. While feedback and submissions may be lodged electronically or by post, electronic lodgment is preferred. For accessibility reasons, please submit responses sent via email in Word format. An additional PDF version may also be submitted.
8. All information (including name and address details) contained in feedback and submissions may be made available to the Synod or Standing Committee unless the respondent indicates that all or part of the feedback or submission is to remain confidential. Respondents who would like all or part of their feedback or submission to remain confidential should clearly set this out at the beginning of their feedback or submission.

### Key highlights of the proposed policy as found in the exposure draft

9. The 'Introduction' section in the Exposure Draft defines the Diocese as a network of churches, schools and multiple other incorporated and unincorporated organisations, with a common purpose. It also outlines the legislative framework through which Synod governs the various organisations.

10. The 'Purpose of the Policy' is explained in the Exposure Draft as being to encourage all churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply to seek high standards of governance appropriate to their context and their individual charitable purposes, whilst advancing our shared ministry, and the disciple-making purposes of the Diocese. It recognises that, while our churches, schools and organisations are responsible for ensuring their own responsible and effective governance, the Synod also has a responsibility to facilitate responsible and effective governance, in partnership with our churches, schools and organisations to which the policy applies.
11. The Exposure Draft of the policy includes a section reflecting on 'The nature of Christian governance and leadership' in which Synod acknowledges and gives thanks for the members of the governing bodies of our churches, schools and organisations who give generously of their time, energy and skills to exercise the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted.
12. A key new feature outlined in the Exposure Draft of the policy is the 'tiered approach' which acknowledges that the current policy only applies to a limited number of organisations, and the Exposure Draft seeks to significantly expand its scope. At the same time, in recognition of the diversity of organisations, a framework of tiers is created, with entities allocated to tiers on the basis of such factors as their size, status of incorporation, and the complexity of the regulatory environment in which they operate.
13. Appendix 1 allocates churches, schools and organisations to which the policy is proposed to apply to one of four tiers, and Appendix 2 sets out a range of governance standards, and clearly indicates which standards apply to which tiers. All entities must pursue their individual charitable purposes in a manner consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese. In the revised policy there is a more confident setting of our own governance framework, rather than relying on the approach of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (**ACNC**) Governance Standards, whilst still acknowledging the requirements of the ACNC Governance Standards.
14. Members of all entities elected or appointed by the Synod, the Archbishop, or a Diocesan organisation must be of Christian faith and character, attend regularly and be actively involved in a Bible-based Christian church. "Christian faith and character" is defined in terms drawn from the accepted definition of doctrine in the Diocese (i.e., the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985*) and the existing Statement of Personal Faith in Appendix 3 to the *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations*, with a personal commitment to seeking to live in obedience to the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ. The Exposure Draft seeks feedback on how this can be best ensured, including whether a declaration or statement of faith would continue to be an appropriate method of doing so.
15. The Exposure Draft also seeks to improve the nomination process for persons to be elected or appointed by the Synod, the Archbishop, or a Diocesan organisation, in the case of Tier 3 and Tier 4 entities, with a focus on demonstrating their Christian faith and character and involvement in a Bible-based Christian church, as well as relevant qualifications, skills and experience.
16. Such nominees must also be willing to sign a Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness in which they commit to pursuing the purposes of the organisation in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.<sup>1</sup> The proposed Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness is not intended as a replacement for a Statement of Personal Faith as it obliges governors and leaders to act govern and lead in a particular way (i.e., the purposes of the organisation are to be pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney).
17. The Exposure Draft defines "doctrine, tenets and beliefs" as a phrase referring to the teaching of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney on any question of faith, and draws on the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985* in noting that the "sources of doctrine" include the Canonical Scriptures, the ancient Creeds, and the historic formularies of Anglicanism including the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal, and the Thirty-nine Articles.<sup>2</sup> These are as found in the Constitution

---

<sup>1</sup> The Committee acknowledges the influence of Judd et al. *Keeping Faith: How Christian organisations can stay true to the way of Jesus* (Acorn Press:2023) for its thoughtful and up-to-date approach to this issue.

<sup>2</sup> The doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese can also be found in other documents, such as the *Property Use Policy* ([link](#)), which outlines doctrines of salvation, the human person, marriage and human sexuality, and Christian freedom, and Synod's *Doctrine Statement on Gender Identity* ([link](#)). The *Property Use Policy* affirms that church property must not be used for purposes which contravene the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.



of the Anglican Church of Australia, itself embedded in the law of New South Wales. Governors and leaders of Anglican schools and organisations to which this policy applies should be required to personally commit to ensuring their schools and organisations pursue their purposes in a manner consistent with doctrine found in documents that have been foundational to Anglicanism for centuries.

18. Where possible it is provided that the Archbishop not be a member of diocesan organisations, but a consistent set of Archiepiscopal rights and responsibilities are outlined, depending on the tier to which the organisation is allocated.

## **Themes drawn from the feedback and how they have been addressed**

19. A number of common themes run through the feedback received by the Committee. The key themes are detailed below, with commentary on how they are addressed in the Exposure Draft. During the consultation process on the Exposure Draft feedback is particularly requested on these issues.

### **1) The nature and applicability of the policy**

20. The existing policy is perceived as a prescriptive document that assumes one size fits all, and some of the feedback has noted that the policy is selectively applied, for example applying to a limited range of organisations.
21. The Exposure Draft seeks to address these concerns in two broad ways. There is a reframing of language, highlighting the gospel-shaped partnership that exists between all churches, schools and organisations to proclaim the lordship of Jesus Christ and progress our disciple-making purposes, while working to advance the broader charitable purposes of the Diocese. Additionally, the new framework of a tiered approach to governance both recognises that different expectations are appropriate for the variety of our churches, schools and organisations to which the policy applies, and seeks to significantly expand the applicability of the *Diocesan Governance Policy* to a broader range of entities.

### **2) The Statement of Personal Faith**

22. The greatest volume of feedback received has related to the existing Statement of Personal Faith in Appendix 3 to the *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations*, especially the *content* of paragraph 2(d), and the *process* by which it was added to the statement at Synod in 2019. The way in which paragraph 2(d) was added is widely perceived as having precluded adequate consultation with schools and organisations and, as such, has become something of a lightning rod for concerns related to consultation more generally.
23. It is worth noting that since a “declaration” for Council members was introduced in Moore College in 1984, multiple different versions of a declaration or statement of faith have been used in the Diocese. Today, in the ordinances governing organisations to which the current Policy applies, at least eight different versions of a declaration or statement of faith can be found and, in the governing ordinances for six organisations (all schools), there is no requirement for a statement of faith.
24. Feedback with regards to the content of paragraph 2(d) has focused on the relational difficulties it has created in school contexts, which in many cases have considerable interface with communities (including alumni) who are deeply influenced by a modern culture hostile to traditional Christian beliefs and practices. These relational difficulties can include personal and familial ramifications that hinder gospel conversations. It is also the case that this cultural hostility may create a barrier for the recruitment of governors and leaders who, while personally agreeing with the statement, may face sanctions from their employer or be prevented from taking up these voluntary roles if they are perceived to be not aligned with the values of their employer.
25. The Committee wishes to emphasise its firm commitment to a form of policy which both ensures governors and leaders of schools and organisations are persons of Christian faith and character, and which is genuinely effective in maintaining organisational faithfulness.

26. The Exposure Draft seeks to address this difficult issue by seeking commitment to historic formularies or documents of national status and applicability. For example, the definition of “Christian faith and character” draws on the sources of doctrine outlined above.
27. Related to this is the approach outlined above which seeks to create a framework where governors elected or appointed by the Synod, the Archbishop, or a Diocesan organisation, in the case of Tier 3 and Tier 4 entities and leaders make a personal commitment to maintaining organisational faithfulness, in addition to being persons of Christian faith and character.

### 3) The role and responsibilities of the Archbishop

28. It is recognised that the role of the Archbishop varies across churches, schools and organisations to which this policy applies. In some cases, the Archbishop is a member of the organisation, and as such is a Responsible Person for the purposes of *the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth). In other cases, the Archbishop’s rights and responsibilities are quite limited. The feedback has drawn attention to inconsistencies and uncertainty in this regard.
29. The Exposure Draft seeks to create a greater level of consistency and certainty with regards to the role of the Archbishop in churches, schools and organisations to which this policy applies. It does this in part through a revival of the concept of the Archbishop as “visitor”, and includes some description of the responsibilities, rights and duties of a visitor, based on the long-standing traditions relating to the value of this role (especially in educational contexts such as universities and colleges). The Exposure Draft sets out consistent expectations for the roles and responsibilities of the Archbishop (according to the applicable tier of governance) that should be incorporated into a school or organisation’s ordinance or governing document.

### 4) The process of change

30. Concerns have been expressed by some schools and organisations to which this policy applies regarding the ability of Synod or Standing Committee to amend ordinances unilaterally. The exposure draft proposes that a policy be adopted with regards to Tier 3 and Tier 4 organisations that are bodies corporate, that commits Synod and Standing Committee to a process of consultation with the governing body of such entities before amendments relating to conformity with the policy guidelines are made.

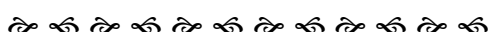
## **Governance Policy Review Committee**

20 July 2023

# Diocesan Governance Policy

## Exposure Draft – 20 July 2023

Contents	Paragraphs
Introduction	1-5
Purpose of this Policy	6-10
The nature of Christian governance and leadership	11-17
Application of this Policy	18-25
Appendix 1: Application to Churches, Schools and Organisations	
Appendix 2: Governance Standards <sup>1</sup>	
Appendix 3: Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness	



### Introduction

1. The Diocese of Sydney (**Diocese**) is a fellowship of churches, schools and organisations. The Diocese proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor 4:5).

Our fellowship is shaped by the gospel and collectively shares our disciple-making purpose. We seek God's work amongst us to multiply Christians, multiply churches, and multiply leaders. To these ends, we long to see our fellowship marked by healthy communication, collaboration, and coordination.

Our churches, schools and organisations are places of gospel hospitality, irrespective of their function or role and, in light of God's grace and mercy, offer an appropriate welcome to all people. This is a guiding principle for this Policy. Commitment to the teaching of Jesus does not preclude service to all, but rather intensifies it. All who wish to serve Jesus as their Lord must also be committed to serving people from all backgrounds, circumstances and world views.

The Diocese is synodically governed, episcopally led and structured as an unincorporated voluntary religious association comprising a network of churches, schools and multiple other incorporated and unincorporated organisations (including trustees of trusts) which together operate under a consensual compact.

The Diocese is also one of 23 dioceses that are part of the separate national voluntary religious association known as the Anglican Church of Australia (**ACA**).

2. Our continuing purpose as Sydney Anglicans is given to us by God in the Scriptures. This purpose is to make disciples by –
  - (a) proclaiming and commending Christ,
  - (b) establishing them in the life of the church,
  - (c) equipping them for compassionate service in the world,
  - (d) sending some to serve beyond our Diocese, and
  - (e) prayerfully seeking God's work in all things.

In doing so, the Diocese advances religion and, through its churches, schools and organisations, pursues other charitable purposes in the Diocese and beyond. In doing so, the Diocese makes a rich contribution to the social capital of communities through education, youth work, social welfare, health, seniors living and aged care, and overseas aid.

3. Responsible and effective governance of our churches, schools and organisations –
  - (a) is essential to the furtherance of the disciple-making purposes of the Diocese, through the pursuit of the individual purpose(s) of each entity within the Diocese, and
  - (b) requires healthy communication, collaboration, and coordination between the parts (i.e., churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese) as partners in our shared ministry.

<sup>1</sup> The previous Policy Guidelines are now to be contained in a separate document.

4. Representative members of the Diocese meet in a synod (**Synod**) to attend to the governance of the Diocese (and other matters arising from membership of the ACA).

The New South Wales Parliament has provided a legislative framework for the Synod to carry out responsible and effective governance. The *Anglican Church of Australia Constitutions Act 1902* empowers the Synod to make ordinances for the order and good government of the ACA within the Diocese. The *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917* gives the Synod the power –

- (a) to vary the trusts on which church trust property is held for one or more purposes of the Diocese,<sup>2</sup>
- (b) to appoint and remove trustees of such property, and
- (c) to constitute councils and committees to govern and control the management and use of such property.

In addition, the *Anglican Church of Australia (Bodies Corporate) Act 1938* gives power to the Synod to constitute such councils and committees as bodies corporate for the management and governance of an entity within the Diocese or for holding, managing or dealing with church trust property held for one or more purposes of the Diocese.

5. In the Diocese there are more than [XX] churches, about 60 schools and organisations established by the Synod and multiple other organisations (including trustees of trusts) in respect of whose organisation or property the Synod is empowered to make ordinances, or the Archbishop-in-Council may impose legally binding conditions. About 20 schools and organisations are incorporated by or under legislation including the *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act*, the *Anglican Church of Australia (Bodies Corporate) Act* or the *Corporations Act 2001* (C'ith).

### Purpose of this Policy

6. The Synod acknowledges that our churches, schools and organisations have taken steps on their own councils, committees and boards (collectively, **governing bodies**) to ensure responsible and effective governance, and to promote communication, collaboration, and coordination amongst themselves.

Nevertheless, the Synod as the 'parliament of the diocese' also has a responsibility to the wider community to facilitate both responsible and effective governance of, and communication, collaboration, and coordination amongst, all churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese.

7. The adoption of a revised Synod approved Diocesan Governance Policy will enable the Synod to exercise this responsibility, and set out its expectations, as it partners with churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese in our shared ministry.
8. In exercising this responsibility Synod expects that those responsible for governing a church, school or organisation in the Diocese will seek the highest standards of governance appropriate to their context.
9. When a church, school or organisation seeks the highest standards of governance appropriate to their context, this will enhance the extent to which it is able to pursue the purpose(s) for which it is established and, in doing so, advances our shared ministry, and the disciple-making purposes of the Diocese.
10. The churches, schools and organisations of the Diocese are instruments of Christian ministry and so play a role in furthering the mission of Christ. Christian faith and discipleship are not, therefore peripheral concerns for the effective governance of our churches, schools and organisations. An expectation of good governance is something we share with people and institutions more widely in our community, but this commitment to furthering the mission of Christ, the crucified Saviour and risen Lord, is a distinctive of the churches, schools and organisations within our Diocese.

### The nature of Christian governance and leadership

11. The Scriptures identify the church of God in a number of ways including the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, God's building, God's temple, and God's household (1 Cor 12:1-2, Eph 5:32-33, 1 Peter 2:4-5 and Eph 2:19-22). Understanding the identity of the church of God helps set the direction and scope of the ministries undertaken by our churches, schools and organisations. Recognising what the church of God is, as identified in the Scriptures, has led the Diocese to seek

<sup>2</sup> Section 4 of the *Anglican Church of Australia Trust Property Act 1917* defines purposes to include religious, educational, cemetery, and all other purposes of the Anglican Church of Australia, whether such purposes are within or beyond the diocese or the State.

to walk in humble obedience to God, faithfully participating in his reconciling of the world to himself through Christ (2 Cor 5:11, 18-21 and Col 2:6-7).

12. The Scriptures calls on us to manage, care, and be good stewards of all God has given (Gen 1:26-28), to recognise the legitimate, God-given authority of the State as both dutiful citizens and God's loyal servants (Matt 22:15-22, Rom 13:2 and 1 Peter 2:13-17) and to do so with generous spirits because "much will be expected of those to whom much has been given." (Luke 12:48)
13. Understanding the Diocese as a fellowship of churches, schools and organisations, all of which are shaped by the gospel and share our disciple-making purpose, requires governance that acknowledges the different parts of the household, with different gifts and opportunities, and different blessings and resources in order that they might work together in our shared ministry of exalting Christ and growing disciples in various contexts and in light of our ever-changing times. Responsible and effective governance must reflect these aspects of the identity of the Diocese so we might live to testify to the reign of God.
14. Leadership is a gift of God for the purposes of order and good government. Among the people of God, church leaders are gifted by God for the teaching, discipline and modelling of godliness to those under their care. Secular leaders are likewise accountable to God for their governance, which is for the good of the community they serve, since they also act as "God's servants" (Rom 13:4). Governing bodies of churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese should therefore have similar standards of integrity, truth and commitment with respect to their governance responsibilities. In particular, Jesus' use of the imagery of both shepherd and servant for his own ministry, as well as that of his apostles, ought to characterise those who would govern our churches, schools and organisations.
15. Scripture states: "We aim at what is honourable not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of others" (2 Cor. 8:21). In light of this, it is appropriate that churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese take pains to ensure not only the substance, but also the appearance of propriety and accountability. This includes abiding by the highest governance standards, which as a minimum include those applying to secular organisations where they are applicable or otherwise appropriate.
16. The Synod acknowledges and gives thanks for the members of the governing bodies of our churches, schools and organisations who give generously of their time, energy and skills to exercise the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted.
17. The Synod encourages the members of the governing bodies of all churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese to work in partnership with the Synod in seeking appropriate standards of governance in their context. Such standards are to be underpinned by prayer, sacrificial service, a dependence upon God for wisdom and a proper regard to best practice so that decisions made will enhance the effectiveness of each church, school or organisation in proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord and making disciples.

### Application of this Policy

18. This Policy sets out the expectations of the Synod which apply to churches, schools and organisations in the Diocese (and the members of their governing bodies) and represents an expansion of the scope of the Policy which previously only applied to a limited number of organisations. This Policy classifies churches, schools and organisations in four tiers, broadly as follows –
  - (a) churches, councils and committees, and unincorporated organisations,
  - (b) entities which operate within the Diocese and are authorised to use the word "Anglican" (or another "Church name") under the Use of Church Names Canon 1989,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Section 6 of the *Anglican Church of Australia Act 1976* (NSW) provides that a person shall not, for the purposes of, or in connection with, any business, trade or profession use, or cause or permit to be used, names and descriptions relating to the Anglican Church of Australia unless the person is authorised to do so pursuant to a canon of the General Synod. "Church name" is defined in the Canon to mean –

- (a) each of the names or descriptions "Church of England", "Church of England in Australia", "Anglican Church of Australia" or "Anglican", and
- (b) any name, initials, word, title, addition, symbol or description which, either alone or in conjunction with other matter (i) refers to this Church or an instrumentality of this Church, or (ii) implies, or tends to the belief, or indicates, or is capable of being understood to indicate, or is calculated to lead persons to infer, that it is a reference to this Church or an instrumentality of this Church.

The Canon authorises the Archbishop-in-Council to issue and withdraw a certificate authorising the use of a "Church name" and impose conditions on the issue of such a certificate.

- (c) incorporated organisations which conduct an enterprise in their own right, and
- (d) larger incorporated organisations which conduct a complex enterprise, or an extensive external regulatory regime is applicable to the organisation.

Each tier is more fully described in Appendix 1.

Foundational standards of governance apply to the first tier (and the members of their governing bodies), whereas increasingly comprehensive standards of governance apply to the second, third and fourth tiers (and the members of their governing bodies).

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on -*

- *the desirability or otherwise of expanding the scope of the Policy to all the churches, schools, organisations and other bodies described in Appendix 1, only some of them or retaining the scope of the Policy to only those organisations set out in Tiers 3 and 4,*
- *the number of tiers and the placement of churches, schools, organisations and other bodies within the tiers is appropriate, and*
- *whether it would be preferable to use another word (e.g., category) rather than “tier” in this Policy.*

19. The expansion of the scope of the Policy recognises changing public expectations of transparency, accountability and good governance within the not-for-profit sector (including charities). The concept of governance encompasses the rules, relationships, policies, systems and processes to ensure that authority within a church, school or organisation is exercised and maintained.

An effective governance framework should have regard to –

- (a) the effectiveness of the governing body,
- (b) the contribution of members of the governing body,
- (c) the way in which governance is applied throughout a church, school or organisation, and
- (d) the strength of the relationships a church, school or organisation fosters with its members and other stakeholders, and other entities as partners in our shared ministry, and the disciple-making purposes, of the Diocese.

Good governance of churches, schools and organisations to which this Policy applies is a critical element in protecting and enhancing public trust and confidence in the structures of the Diocese.<sup>4</sup>

20. This Policy does not apply to the Synod as a whole since when in session the primary responsibility of members of Synod is legislative, although it does apply to the Standing Committee. The responsibilities and duties of members of Synod are different to the responsibilities and duties of the members of a governing body of a church, school or organisation.

Nevertheless, Synod commits to having due regard to the principles set out in this Policy in formulating rules and policies for the conduct of its own affairs and business.

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on whether the application of the Policy to Standing Committee, and the commitment of Synod to have due regard to the principles set out in this Policy in the conduct of its own affairs and business, are appropriate.*

21. This Policy –
- (a) sets out the expectations of Synod in relation to the governance of churches, schools and organisations to which this Policy applies,
  - (b) does not create legally binding obligations on any church, school or organisation, except to the extent the provisions of this policy are included in an ordinance, constitution or other instrument which applies to that entity,
  - (c) does not prevent an act or practice that is necessary for a church, school, organisation or person to comply with the law, and
  - (d) is not intended to prevent discussion and debate about contentious issues nor require a withdrawal from, or the exclusion from properties, services or activities of, those who do not share the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The fact that the ACNC cannot take enforcement action against churches and organisations which are ‘basic religious charities’ following a breach of the ACNC Governance Standards (which to a large extent reflect basic principles of good governance) reinforces the importance of the Synod exercising its responsibility to facilitate both responsible and effective governance of, and communication, collaboration, and coordination amongst, all entities in the Diocese.

<sup>5</sup> Paragraphs (a) and (b) are intended to clarify the operation of the Policy, especially in relation to entities which operate within the Diocese and are authorised to use the word “Anglican” (or another “Church name”) under the *Use of Church Names Canon*. Paragraph (c) reflects a provision found in other Synod policies (e.g., para. 10(d) of the Property Use Policy).

22. In this Policy –

**ACA** has the meaning set out in paragraph 1.

**ACNC** means the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

**basic religious charity** has the meaning set out in section 205-15 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

**broader charitable purposes** means the purposes set out in paragraph 2 as amended, updated or prioritised by the Archbishop, or the Synod for the purposes of this Policy, from time to time.

**chief executive officer** means the person who is responsible to the governing body for the leadership and management of an organisation in the Diocese, including the head of a school.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>7</sup> **Christian faith and character** includes -

- (a) belief that God's word written, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct,
- (b) belief in the Christian faith as professed by the church of Christ from primitive times, and in particular as set forth in the creeds known as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed,
- (c) belief 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 that we are justified before God by faith only, and
- (d) a personal commitment to seeking to live in obedience to the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ.

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on -*

- *the provisions of Appendix 2 which refer to "Christian faith and character" and their application to the proposed four tiers, including whether a different approach is warranted for some organisations (e.g., all or some schools), but not other organisations,*
- *whether all or some of the standards of personal behaviour and, where applicable, the practice of pastoral ministry set out in the ACA's national code of conduct, Faithfulness in Service (FIS), as adopted in the Diocese from time to time, are an appropriate reference point for living in obedience to the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ which could be specifically mentioned in paragraph (d),*
- *if they are an appropriate reference point for obedient living, should the commitments to "maintain chastity in singleness and faithfulness in marriage" (FIS 7.2) and "not engage in disgraceful conduct of a sexual nature" (FIS 7.4) be specifically mentioned. Alternatively, should other commitments in FIS also be specifically mentioned? Listing only one element of faithful living (i.e., chastity in singleness and faithfulness in marriage), or some elements only, highlights that particular issue(s), and may have the (unintended) effect of weakening others which could then be perceived as unimportant, and*
- *whether there are other appropriate reference points for living in obedience to the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ which could be specifically mentioned in paragraph (d).*
- *the removal of an express statement equivalent to paragraph 2(d) of the Statement of Personal Faith in the current Policy (i.e., that [Christian] faith produces obedience in accordance with God's word, including sexual faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman, and abstinence in all other circumstances), and*
- *whether the use of a declaration or statement of faith (whether in the form of the Statement of Personal Faith in Appendix 3 of the current Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations, or another form) is an appropriate way of determining or assessing whether a person is of Christian faith and character.*

**doctrine, tenets and beliefs** is a phrase which refers to the teaching of the ACA in the Diocese on any question of faith.<sup>8</sup>

Paragraph (d) is based on paragraphs 10(a) and (b) of the *Property Use Policy* but may not be necessary for the Governance Policy.

<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this Policy, a parish does not have a chief executive officer.

<sup>7</sup> Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of the definition of Christian faith and character draws on the sources of doctrine set out in the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985* and statements of doctrine made the Synod or the Archbishop-in-Council, as well as the Statement of Personal Faith in Appendix 3 of the current Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations. Paragraph (d) introduces a new requirement relating to a person's behaviour.

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on the use of the words “tenets and beliefs”, and the necessity or desirability of the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese being collated in a single place as a reference for churches, schools and organisations to which this Policy applies.*

**Diocese** has the meaning set out in paragraph 1.

**entity** means a parish or organisation<sup>9</sup> as classified in one of the four tiers set out in Appendix 1.

**Governance Standards** means the standards in Appendix 2.

**governing body** means the body of persons responsible for governing an entity. A governing body includes a body known as a board, council or committee.

**meeting** means a meeting of a governing body.

**member** means a member of a governing body.

**organisation** means a school or another incorporated or unincorporated body (including trustees of a trust) –

- (a) which is constituted by ordinance or resolution of the Synod, or
- (b) in respect of which, or whose property, the Synod may make ordinances, or the Archbishop-in-Council may impose legally binding conditions.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>11</sup> **parish** means a parish or provisional parish constituted under or recognised as such for the purposes of the *Parishes Ordinance 1979* or a recognised church or provisional recognised church recognised under the *Recognised Churches Ordinance 2000* and, for the purposes of this Policy, includes a cathedral.

**Parish Council** means the council, chapter or similar body of a parish as constituted under an ordinance.

**Policy Guidelines** means the policy guidelines adopted by the Standing Committee in accordance with paragraph 24.

**Regional Council** means the council of a Region constituted under the *Regions Ordinance 1995*.

**Standing Committee** means the Committee appointed pursuant to the *Standing Committee Ordinance 1897*. **Synod** means the Synod of the Diocese and includes, when the Synod is not in session, the Standing Committee of the Synod.

23. In support of our shared ministry, and the disciple-making purposes of the Diocese, this Policy sets out the Governance Standards that the Synod considers should apply to the churches, schools and organisations to which this Policy applies (and the members of their governing bodies) in the manner indicated in Appendices 1, 2 and 3.
24. The Standing Committee may set policy guidelines for the constituting ordinances of Tier 3 and 4 entities which are bodies corporate (including guidelines in relation to governing body composition, the term of office of members and casual vacancies, quorum for meetings, and the passing of resolutions). Such policy guidelines may go beyond the Governance Standards but must be consistent with the Governance Standards and applied in a flexible manner reflecting Synod's partnership with Tier 3 and 4 entities in our shared ministry, and the disciple-making purposes of the Diocese.

<sup>8</sup> The Schedule to the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985* defines “doctrine” in these terms, and for the purposes of this Policy the addition of the words “tenets and beliefs” reflects terminology used in other contexts but is not intended to add to the word “doctrine”.

The sources of doctrine include (a) the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, (b) the Christian faith as professed by the Church of Christ from primitive times, and in particular as set forth in the creeds known as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed, (c) the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ, and (d) the book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal and the Thirty-Nine Articles.

Doctrine may also be declared in statements made by (i) the Synod of the Diocese with the concurrence of the Archbishop, or (ii) the Archbishop-in-Council, provided that such statements are consistent with the sources of doctrine in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above. Such statements include Synod's *Property Use Policy*, which outlines doctrines of salvation, the human person, marriage and human sexuality, and Christian freedom, and Synod's *Doctrine Statement on Gender Identity*.

<sup>9</sup> This Policy uses the expression “churches, schools and organisations”. However, Appendix 1 and the Governance Standards in Appendix 2 use the expressions “entities”, “parish” and “organisations” as defined in this paragraph 22 for simplicity.

<sup>10</sup> This includes entities which operate within the Diocese and are authorised to use the word “Anglican” (or another “Church name”) under the Use of Church Names Canon – see footnote 3.

<sup>11</sup> Are there other parochial or ecclesiastical units which should be listed in this definition and the definition of “Parish Council”?



Where it is proposed to amend the constituting ordinance of a Tier 3 or 4 entity which is a body corporate in order to conform with the Policy Guidelines, a consultation process must be undertaken with the governing body of the entity before any such amendments are made. Where a governing body believes that a particular Policy Guideline should not apply, it would usually be appropriate for the governing body to provide a brief explanation of its position as part of the consultation process.

25. The Synod anticipates that it will amend this Policy from time to time in order to better align the Governance Standards with our shared ministry, and the disciple-making purposes of the Diocese, and to reflect any changes to regulatory requirements and governance standards observed by secular organisations. For this purpose, the Synod encourages on-going input from the members of governing bodies.

exposure draft

Appendix 1: Application to Churches, Schools<sup>12</sup> and Organisations

	Types of Churches, Schools and Organisations	Specified Entities <sup>13</sup>	Applicable paragraphs of Appendices 2 and 3 [To be completed]
<b>Tier 1 Entities</b>	<p>The wardens of a parish (as trustees of church trust property)</p> <p>A Parish Council</p> <p>Any unincorporated or incorporated entity controlled by a Parish.<sup>14</sup></p> <p>A Regional Council</p> <p>The Standing Committee</p> <p>Any other unincorporated organisation<sup>15</sup> (other than an unincorporated organisation declared by the Standing Committee to be a Tier 3 or 4 entity).<sup>16</sup></p> <p>(including in each case, any of their committees or subcommittees)</p>	<p>Anglican Media Council</p> <p>Arundel House Council</p> <p>Living Faith Council</p> <p>Ministry Training and Development Council</p> <p>Sydney Church of England Finance and Loans Board (Sydney Anglican Loans)</p> <p>[others to be included as identified]</p>	
<b>Tier 2 Entities</b>	<p>An entity which operates within the Diocese and is authorised to use the word "Anglican" (or another "Church name") under the <i>Use of Church Names Canon 1989</i><sup>17</sup>.</p> <p>An entity associated with an entity referred to in the preceding paragraph which also uses a "Church name" (as defined in the Canon).<sup>18</sup></p>	<p>Entities registered on the Use of Church Names Register maintained by the General Secretary of the ACA under the <i>Use of Church Names Canon</i> including –<sup>19</sup></p> <p>Anglican Deaconess Ministries</p> <p>[Anglican Insurance Agencies Pty Ltd]</p> <p>Anglican Mothers' Union [Australia, Diocese of Sydney]</p> <p>[Church of England Historical Society]</p> <p>Anglican Youth Department Diocese of Sydney</p> <p>Ski Lodge Limited (t/as Southern Cross Alpine Lodge)</p> <p>International Chinese School</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued on next page</i></p>	

<sup>12</sup> For the avoidance of doubt, in the Appendices to this Policy, the word "school" is not intended to include a pre-school or any other entity which is not registered and accredited for the purposes of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

<sup>13</sup> The column headed "Specified Entities" contains a non-exhaustive list of organisations which are included in the relevant tier. An entity which meets the description in the column headed "Types of Churches, Schools and Organisations" is required to comply with the applicable paragraphs of Appendices 2 and 3 even if it is not listed in the column headed "Specified Entities". The Diocesan Secretary may update the column headed "Specified Entities" as required from time to time.

<sup>14</sup> For example, a pre-school where a parish is entitled to appoint a majority of the members of a management committee or other governing body.

<sup>15</sup> For the avoidance of doubt this includes any fund or trust controlled by another Tier 1 entity.

<sup>16</sup> In making such a declaration, the Standing Committee is to have regard to the similarity of the activities of the unincorporated organisation to the activities of incorporated organisations classified in Tiers 3 or 4. A power to classify such an unincorporated organisation as a Tier 3 or 4 entity includes a power to re-classify the organisation as a Tier 1 entity.

<sup>17</sup> The following entities listed in the Schedule to the *General Synod – Use of Church Names Canon 1989 Amendment Canon 2014* appear to no longer exist - Anglican Boys' Society, Anglican Girls' Friendly Society, Anglican Men's Society and Anglican Women of Australia – as their registration with the ACNC has been revoked.

<sup>18</sup> There appear to be a number of foundations and associations linked to some of the entities in the list which also use uses a "Church name" (as so defined in the Canon). See footnote 3 for the definition of "Church name".

<sup>19</sup> The list excludes organisations which appear to operate only outside the Diocese.

	Types of Churches, Schools and Organisations	Specified Entities <sup>13</sup>	Applicable paragraphs of Appendices 2 and 3 [To be completed]
		Kambala Meriden School Mosman Church of England Preparatory School Limited SCEGGS Darlinghurst SCEGGS Redlands <i>[list to be confirmed]</i>	
<b>Tier 3 Entities</b>	<p>An incorporated organisation which conducts an enterprise in its own right (rather than an administrative function under an ordinance), has an Australian Business Number and is not a Tier 4 entity.</p> <p>Any unincorporated or incorporated entity controlled by such an incorporated entity.</p>	<p><b>Diocesan schools</b></p> Abbotsleigh (The Council of) Arden Anglican School Council (The) Barker College (The Council of) Campbelltown Anglican Schools Council Illawarra Grammar School (The Council of The) King's School (The Council of The) Macarthur Anglican School Council St Andrew's Cathedral School (The Council of) St Catherine's School, Waverley (The Council of) Sydney Church of England Grammar School Council (SHORE) Tara Anglican School for Girls (The Council of) Trinity Grammar School (The Council of) William Branwhite Clarke College Council <p><b>Other organisations</b></p> Anglican Church Growth Corporation Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Sydney Anglican National Superannuation Board Anglican Youth and Education Diocese of Sydney (Anglican Youthworks) Archbishop of Sydney's Anglican Aid (The) Endowment of the See Corporation. Evangelism and New Churches Glebe Administration Board St Andrew's House Corporation Sydney Anglican (National Redress Scheme) Corporation Sydney Diocesan Services	

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on whether it would be appropriate to split Tier 3 into two tiers (i.e., five tiers in total)– Diocesan schools in one tier, and other organisations in another tier – and, if so, the extent to which the Governance Standards in Appendix 2 would apply to differently to the two tiers.*

	<b>Types of Churches, Schools and Organisations</b>	<b>Specified Entities</b>	<b>Applicable paragraphs of Appendices 2 and 3</b> <i>[To be completed]</i>
<b>Tier 4 Entities</b>	<p>An incorporated organisation declared by the Standing Committee to be a Tier 4 entity for the purposes of this Policy.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>Any unincorporated or incorporated entity controlled by such an incorporated entity.</p>	<p>Anglican Community Services (Anglicare)</p> <p>Anglican Schools Corporation</p> <p>Moore Theological College Council</p>	

exposure draft

<sup>20</sup> In making such a declaration, the Standing Committee is to have regard to the complexity of the enterprise(s) conducted by the organisation and the regulatory regime(s) applicable to the organisation. Relevant factors to be considered by the Standing Committee would include (a) the annual revenue (including the extent of direct or indirect government funding) and net assets of the organisation, (b) external accreditation by one or more Federal or New South Wales regulatory authorities, and (c) the extent of the duties and compliance obligations imposed on the organisation and/or the members of its governing body by legislation and regulatory authorities. A power to classify an incorporated organisation as a Tier 4 entity includes a power to re-classify the organisation as a Tier 3 entity.

## Appendix 2: Governance Standards

The Synod regards the following Governance Standards as applicable to all entities (and the members of their governing bodies) in the manner indicated in Appendix 1 and this Appendix and expects all entities to implement each of the Governance Standards applicable to them in an appropriate and demonstrable way.

### Part 1 Purpose and organisational faithfulness

#### A. Mission clarity

- (a) The charitable purpose(s) of the entity must be clearly expressed in an ordinance and must align with the broader charitable purposes, of the Diocese.
- (b) The charitable purpose(s) of the entity –
- (i) must be clearly expressed in its constituting ordinance or other instrument, and
  - (ii) in the case of a Tier 3 or 4 entity, must align with the broader charitable purposes, of the Diocese, and information about them should be made available to the public, including donors, employees and volunteers, as well as those that benefit from its activities.
- (c) All entities registered with the ACNC should be registered with “advancing religion” as their charitable subtype, or one of multiple charitable subtypes.
- (d) The entity must pursue the charitable purpose(s) for which it is established in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.
- (e) To the extent permitted by law and in recognition that each entity is part of a network of entities within the Diocese, each entity should pursue its charitable purpose(s) in a manner which advances the broader charitable purposes, of the Diocese.

Tier			
1	2	3	4
Y			
	Y	Y	Y
Y	Y	Y	Y
Y	Y	Y	Y
Y		Y	Y
Tier			
1	2	3	4
Y	Y	Y	Y

#### B. Not-for-profit character

- (a) The funds and other property of the entity must not be distributed for the private benefit of individuals or any other entity -
- (i) during the operation of the entity, other than in the pursuit or furtherance of the entity’s charitable purpose(s), or
  - (ii) on its winding-up or dissolution, other than in the pursuit or furtherance of similar charitable purpose(s).
- (b) The entity must comply with its not-for-profit character.

## Part 2 Leadership and membership of governing bodies

## C. Christian leadership shaped by the Bible

- (a) The wardens of a parish, members of a Parish Council and members of a Regional Council or the Standing Committee must be an active member of a parish in the Diocese and otherwise satisfy the requirements of the ordinance or other instrument governing their election or appointment.

Members of other tier 1 entities must satisfy the requirements of paragraphs C.(b) and (c).

- (b) Members elected or appointed by the Synod, the Archbishop or another (Diocesan) organisation must -

- (i) be of Christian faith and character, attend regularly and be actively involved in a Bible-based Christian church, and
- (ii) otherwise satisfy the requirements of the ordinance or other instrument governing their election or appointment.

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on:*

- *the definition of “Christian faith and character” and the specific questions set out under the definition in paragraph 22 of this Exposure Draft, and*
- *whether a definition of “Bible-based Christian church” (e.g., a church where the Bible is honoured and taught as the written word of God, to be believed and obeyed by all Christ’s disciples) should be included in the Policy.*

- (c) Other members must satisfy the requirements of the ordinance or other instrument governing their election or appointment.<sup>21</sup>

*Paragraph C.(c) is a significant change from the current Policy which currently requires such members to sign a Statement of Personal Faith. During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on this proposed change. See also paragraph C.(g).*

- (d) Any person who nominated for election or appointment by the Synod, the Archbishop or another (Diocesan) organisation must -

- (i) provide evidence of their Christian faith and character and involvement in a Bible-based Christian church,
- (ii) consent to the nomination and the collection of personal information,
- (iii) be willing to sign the Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness (see paragraph D),

Tier			
1	2	3	4
Y			
In part – see C.(a)	Y	Y	Y
	Y	Y	Y
		Y	Y

<sup>21</sup> Although other members (e.g., members of the governing body of a school) need not be of Christian faith and character, attend regularly and be actively involved in a Bible-based Christian church, in the case of Tier 3 and Tier 4 entities, such members are required to sign a Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness (see paragraph D) which is a much stronger commitment than the previous Statement of Support for Christian Ethos which was included as a transitional measure in the current Policy when it was first adopted by the Synod.

(iv) have the relevant qualifications, skills, experience and Christian ministry involvement required under any applicable law or ordinance or any other instrument governing their election or appointment, as stipulated by the chair,				
in the manner required by the ordinance or other instrument governing their election or appointment.				
<i>During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on -</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>the move away from a nominee being willing to sign a Statement of Personal Faith to a broader means of assessing a nominee's Christian faith and character,</i></li> <li>• <i>how a nominee's Christian faith and character can be best ensured,</i></li> <li>• <i>the effectiveness of statements of personal faith,</i></li> <li>• <i>the use of a new a Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness, and</i></li> <li>• <i>the nomination process and how it might be improved to ensure that a nominee has the qualifications, skills, experience and Christian ministry involvement which are required by the governing body at that time to enable it to effectively pursue its charitable purpose(s) (i.e., not just those qualifications, skills, experience and Christian ministry involvement required under any applicable law, ordinance or other instrument).</i></li> </ul>				
(e) The chair must satisfy the requirements of paragraph C.(b).			Y	Y
(f) The total number of members should be no less than 9 and no more than 14.				
<i>This requirement is unchanged from the current Policy. During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on whether the current minimum (9) and maximum (14) numbers remain appropriate</i>			Y	Y
(g) A two-thirds majority of the members must be elected or appointed by the Synod, the Archbishop or another (Diocesan) organisation.				
<i>This provision allows, among other options, for a governing body to appoint additional members or the governing body of a school to include alumni representatives. During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on whether a higher proportion (e.g., three-quarters) would be appropriate.</i>			Y	Y
(h) Members must include at least –				
(i) two clergy licensed in the Diocese, and				
(ii) two members with (at minimum) a three-year theological degree from Moore Theological College or another college that is endorsed by the Archbishop for the purpose of this paragraph,			Y	Y
noting that the requirements of paragraphs C.(h)(i) and (ii) may be met by the same two people.				

- (i) Except as otherwise set out in the ordinance or other instrument governing their election or appointment, a retiring member should only be eligible for re-election or re-appointment where such re-election or re-appointment would not in the normal course result in that person being a member for more than 14 consecutive years.<sup>22</sup>
- (j) The chair and any other officer of the governing body should be elected by members for a term not exceeding 3 years. Such persons are eligible to stand for re-election but should not serve in the same office for more than 9 consecutive years.
- (k) <sup>23</sup> The chief executive officer must –
  - (i) be of Christian faith and character,<sup>20</sup> attend regularly and be actively involved in a Bible-based Christian church,
  - (ii) be willing to sign the Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness (see paragraph D), and
  - (iii) otherwise satisfy the requirements of applicable law or ordinance or any other instrument governing their election or appointment.

In addition, prior to their appointment, the Archbishop (or his delegate) must be satisfied that the Christian faith and character of the chief executive officer will enable the purpose(s) of the organisation to be pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.

		Y	Y
		Y	Y
		Y	Y
<b>Tier</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
		Y	Y

**D. Personal Commitment to Organisational faithfulness**

The election or appointment of a person as a member or chief executive officer is subject to the person signing a Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness and delivering it to the Chair of the governing body prior to the person taking up the role of member or chief executive officer.

The form of the Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness is set out in Appendix 3.<sup>24</sup>

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on the form and content of the Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness. See also paragraph C.(d).*

<sup>22</sup> For this purpose, years are consecutive unless they are broken by a period of at least 12 months.  
<sup>23</sup> This paragraph is to be reviewed following the release of the Federal Government’s response of any recommendations of the Australian law Reform Commission’s inquiry into Religious Educational Institutions and Anti-Discrimination Laws.  
<sup>24</sup> The Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness is a new concept and is not proposed as a replacement for the Personal Statement of Faith. It is a new, and different, concept.  
 Whether the use of a declaration or statement of faith (whether in the form of the Statement of Personal Faith in Appendix 3 of the current *Governance Policy for Diocesan Organisations*, or another form) is an appropriate way of determining or assessing whether a person is of Christian faith and character is a separate question and one of the matters on which comments are particularly invited during the consultation period for this Exposure Draft.



**E. Role of the Archbishop**

- (a) Except where required by an Act of Parliament, the Archbishop should not be a member and, accordingly, the relevant ordinance or other instrument constituting the entity must clearly set out –
- (i) whether the Archbishop is, or is not, a member, and
  - (ii) if a member, whether or not he has a deliberative and/or a casting vote.
- (b) If the Archbishop is a member, he should be entitled to chair meetings when present.
- (c) The Archbishop (or his nominee) should be able to address the governing body on any pastoral or policy issue concerning the ACA as it applies to the entity, including the appointment of a chief executive officer for the entity.
- (d) If the Archbishop is not a member, the relevant ordinance or other instrument constituting the entity may designate the Archbishop as President of the entity.
- During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on the role of the Archbishop in the governance of entities including when it is appropriate for the Archbishop to be a member of a governing body, and whether, as a general rule, the term Visitor should be used rather than President (with consequential drafting changes to paragraphs E.(e) and (f)).*
- (e) If the Archbishop is not a member (whether or not the Archbishop is President of the entity), he (or his nominee) should be entitled to receive meeting papers at his request and attend meetings.
- (f) If the Archbishop is President of the entity the relevant ordinance or other instrument constituting the entity should clearly provide that the Archbishop is entitled to exercise the responsibilities, rights and duties of a visitor.<sup>25</sup>
- The responsibilities, rights and duties of a visitor include -
- (i) the power to settle disputes between members of the entity,
  - (ii) making determinations on the interpretations of the [internal rules] of the entity, and
  - (iii) visiting and inspecting the premises and/or ministries of the entity to ensure that its charitable purpose(s) are being pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrine s, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.

Tier			
1	2	3	4
Y	Y	Y	Y
Y		Y	Y
		Y	Y
		Y	Y
		Y	Y
		Y	Y

<sup>25</sup> Nothing in this policy prevents an ordinance or other instrument providing that the Archbishop (even if not President) is entitled to exercise the responsibilities, rights and duties of a visitor, nor does it prevent the Archbishop exercising responsibilities, rights and duties otherwise afforded by law.

**F. Governing body member responsibilities**

Members must –

- (a) ensure that the entity’s charitable purpose(s) are pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese,
- (b) act in good faith,
- (c) act honestly and fairly in the best interests of the entity and to further the charitable purpose(s) of the entity,
- (d) exercise the powers and discharge the duties of the entity with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable individual would exercise as a member,
- (e) not use their position as a member for an improper purpose or in a manner which is inconsistent with the entity’s charitable purpose(s),
- (f) maintain any confidentiality of information obtained in the performance of their duties as a member, and not use such information for an improper purpose or in a manner which is inconsistent with the entity’s charitable purpose(s),
- (g) ensure that the financial affairs of the entity are managed in a responsible manner, and
- (h) ensure any actual, potential or perceived conflict between their material personal interests (including as a member of the governing body of another entity), and their responsibilities set out in the preceding paragraphs, are disclosed and managed in a proper manner.

Tier			
1	2	3	4
Y	Y	Y	Y

**G. Additional suitability requirements**

- (a) Members who are clergy or church workers<sup>26</sup> must comply with the standards of personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry set out in the ACA’s national code of conduct, *Faithfulness in Service (FIS)*, as adopted in the Diocese from time to time.
- (b) Other members elected or appointed by the Synod, the Archbishop or another (Diocesan) organisation should observe standards of personal behaviour consistent with:
  - (i) seeking to live in obedience to the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ,<sup>27</sup> and
  - (ii) their obligations as a member of the governing body of a Diocesan organisation.

Tier			
1	2	3	4
Y	Y	Y	Y
Y		Y	Y

*During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited as to whether paragraphs G.(b)(ii) and (c) should also refer to standards of personal behaviour which do not bring the Diocesan organisation or the Diocese into disrepute and, if so, how such a standard could be worded.*

<sup>26</sup> References to clergy and church workers are to such persons within the meaning of FIS.

<sup>27</sup> This paragraph to be reviewed and updated for any changes to the definition of “Christian faith and character” in paragraph 22.

(c)	Other members should observe standards of personal behaviour which are consistent with their obligations as a member of the governing body of a Diocesan organisation.	Y		Y	Y
(d)	The chief executive officer must comply with the standards of personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry set out in FIS.	Y		Y	Y
(e)	Members and the chief executive officer must comply with applicable legislative requirements for working with children and/or vulnerable people.	Y	Y	Y	Y
(f)	A member must not have been disqualified by the ACNC Commissioner, at any time during the preceding 12 months, from being a responsible entity of a registered entity under the ACNC Act.	Y	Y	Y	Y
<i>During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited as to whether paragraphs G.(f) and (g) should also apply to the chief executive officer.</i>					
(g)	A member must not be a person who is disqualified from managing a corporation within the meaning of the Corporations Act 2001.		Y	Y	Y

### Part 3 Organisational accountability

#### H. Responsibility and transparency

		Tier			
		1	2	3	3
(a)	The entity must ensure its on-going operations, the safety of people in its care and the safety of its assets through compliance with applicable laws and ordinances and policies of the Synod.	Y	Y	Y	Y
(b)	The governing body should have the power to delegate the performance of any of its functions to one or more committees provided any such committee is chaired by a member and reports the exercise of its delegated functions to the next meeting.	Y	Y	Y	Y
(c)	All entities registered with the ACNC must comply with the ACNC External Conduct Standards (if applicable).	Y	Y	Y	Y
(d)	The entity must not, and its governing body must not allow entity to, operate while insolvent.	Y	Y	Y	Y
(e)	An entity registered with the ACNC as a basic religious charity should comply with the ACNC Governance Standards.	Y			
(f)	An entity registered with the ACNC (and which is not a basic religious charity), must comply with the ACNC Governance Standards.		Y	Y	Y
(g)	The governing body should develop policies –				
(i)	to ensure members have undertaken safe ministry training in accordance, and otherwise comply, with the <i>Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020</i> and other applicable ordinances relating to ministry to children and youth,	Y		Y	Y

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) to ensure appropriate identification and management of related party transactions,</li> <li>(iii) for the management of risks to the entity,</li> <li>(iv) for the professional development and training of members in matters relevant to the entity's operations including governance practices, and</li> <li>(v) [other].</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(h) The entity must maintain an adequate level of accountability and transparency to –             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the Synod in accordance with applicable ordinances, and</li> <li>(ii) parishioners, members, donors, employees and volunteers, as well as those that benefit from its activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Y		Y	Y
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) A Tier 3 entity should, and a Tier 4 must, have a charter which sets out the responsibilities of the governing body including -             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the role of the chief executive officer and senior management of the entity,</li> <li>(ii) matters specifically reserved for governing body decision-making, and</li> <li>(iii) the governing body's operating protocols.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			Y	Y
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(j) The entity must -             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) ensure that personal information (as defined in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (C'ith)) is managed in accordance with applicable law or ordinance,</li> <li>(ii) [other]</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			Y	Y
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(l) <sup>28</sup> The governing body of a Tier 3 entity should, and of a Tier 4 entity must, develop effective processes to ensure –             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the collective qualifications, skills, experience and gender balance of its members are adequate having regard to its charitable purpose(s) and the activities the entity it undertakes in pursuit of its charitable purpose(s),</li> <li>(ii) the induction of new members and the ongoing training and development of existing members,</li> <li>(iii) the regular review of the performance of the governing body, and</li> <li>(iv) member succession planning and governing body renewal under the direction of the chair.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			Y	Y
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(m) <sup>25</sup> An entity should maintain as a reference for members a record, preferably in the form of a handbook, of the ordinances by which it is constituted or regulated and any other documents or policies by which it is governed.</li> </ul>			Y	Y

<sup>28</sup> Should this requirement also apply to tier 1 entities?

- (n) Members should not be remunerated for their service as members except by way of reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.
- (o) To the extent permitted by law, the governing body may develop a policy for the remuneration of the members of its governing body for their service as members (including by way of reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses), subject to the maximum annual remuneration amount being approved by the Standing Committee.

*Paragraph H.(o) is a change from the current Policy (i.e., paragraph H.(n)) and has been suggested having regard to the complexity of the enterprise(s) conducted by a Tier 4 entity and the regulatory regime(s) applicable to them. During the consultation period for this Exposure Draft, comments are particularly invited on whether this change is appropriate.*

#### I. Reporting to Synod and/or Standing Committee

- (a) The entity must provide annual and other reports in accordance with applicable ordinances.
- (b) In an annual report provided by an entity in accordance with an applicable ordinance, the governing body must disclose any failure by the governing body to comply with the Governance Standards and set out the steps taken, or being taken, to remedy non-compliance.
- (c) An entity which manages church trust property must submit to the Synod for tabling an annual report or such other reports as Synod are required in accordance with applicable ordinances and must take reasonable steps to ensure such reports are accurate, complete and provided on a timely basis.
- (d) Members of the Synod must have reasonable access to the annual reports of the entity tabled at the Synod and must have an adequate opportunity to ask and have answered questions about the governance of the entity.
- (e) In addition, an entity must promptly advise the Standing Committee of –
- (i) any failure to comply with –
- (A) applicable governance standard or requirement, or any financial or prudential reporting requirement, of any government authority (other than the ACNC) likely to lead to loss of any licence or approval required to conduct current activities, or
- (B) the financial or other covenants under any agreement with a bank or other financial institution for the provision of financial accommodation in excess of \$10,000,000 likely to lead to the early termination of such financial accommodation,

Y		Y	
			Y
Tier			
1	2	3	3
Y		Y	Y
Y		Y	Y
		Y	Y
		Y	Y
			Y

- (ii) [event or circumstance which may result in the entity (or any member of the governing body) being indicted in relation to the alleged commission of an offence under any law punishable on conviction by a penalty that may include imprisonment for a maximum period -
  - (A) if the offence involves fraud or dishonesty - 3 months or more, or
  - (B) in any other case--12 months or more, and
- (iii) [*describe any additional reporting requirements*].

--	--	--	--

exposure draft

### Appendix 3: Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness

#### Personal Commitment to Organisational Faithfulness

1. I acknowledge that the purpose(s) of [*insert name of entity*] (the “**diocesan organisation**”) as set out in [*insert name of constituting ordinance / describe the diocesan organisation’s constitution*] \* (“**constitution**”) are to be pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney. \*\*
2. As [a member / a member of [*insert name of the governing body*] / the chief executive officer] \* of the diocesan organisation I shall endeavour to –
  - (a) fulfill my duties in accordance with the constitution and applicable laws and ordinances,
  - (b) wherever practicable, ensure other provisions of the Diocesan Governance Policy are adopted by the diocesan organisation, and
  - (c) ensure that the diocesan organisation’s purpose(s) are pursued in a manner which is consistent with the doctrines, tenets and beliefs of the Diocese.
3. I agree that my continuance as a [member / a member of [*insert name of the governing body*] / the chief executive officer] \* is dependent upon my continuing agreement with this commitment and I undertake to resign if this ceases to be the case.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full name (in block letters)

Date:

\* Delete whichever is not applicable.

\*\* In this statement the phrase “doctrine, tenets and beliefs” has the meaning set out in the Diocesan Governance Policy.

## South Western Region buildings and property strategy

### 15/22 Toward the development of a Diocesan Property Strategy

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

#### Key Points

- By Resolution 15/22, the Synod asked the Standing Committee to prepare a Diocesan-wide, Ministry-led, Buildings and Property Strategy.
- One Regional Ministry-led, Buildings and Property Strategy has been prepared for consideration by Synod before embarking on preparing the remaining four Regional strategies and an over-arching Diocesan-wide strategy. The South Western Region was chosen as the subject of the first draft Regional Strategy, which will be a template for the remaining four Diocesan Regions.
- The Draft South Western Region Buildings and Property Strategy has been prepared for review by, and consultation with, Synod members, in consultation with Rectors and Wardens of the South Western Region and working in close cooperation with the Regional Bishop.
- The Draft Strategy is available at [www.sds.asn.au/synod-2023-draft-south-western-region-building-and-property-strategy](http://www.sds.asn.au/synod-2023-draft-south-western-region-building-and-property-strategy). Comments on the draft may be made up to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Comments/submissions will be reviewed, and any necessary amendments made to the Draft Strategy, prior to approval by the Standing Committee.

#### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to report back on progress against Synod resolution 15/22.

#### Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report 'South Western Region buildings and property strategy' –
  - (a) note that the members of Synod have been invited to provide feedback on the draft South Western Region Buildings and Property Strategy, and that they can send their feedback on the Strategy to the Diocesan Secretary (DiocesanSecretary@sydney.anglican.asn.au) by 15 November 2023,
  - (b) request the Standing Committee to consider approving the South Western Region Buildings and Property Strategy, having taken into account the feedback from Synod members, and
  - (c) request the Standing Committee to prepare the remaining four Regional strategies and an over-arching Diocesan-wide ministry-directed property strategy and report back to the next session of the Synod.

#### Background

4. By Resolution 15/22, the Synod, among other things, asked the Standing Committee to prepare a diocesan-wide ministry-directed property strategy for the next session of the Synod, taking into account the feedback from Synod members.
5. Standing Committee delegated the coordination of the diocesan-wide ministry-directed property strategy to the Anglican Church Growth Corporation (**ACGC**).
6. Only one response was received to the 2022 Synod discussion paper.



## Discussion

7. In Q1 2023, the ACGC Chair and CEO agreed, in consultation with the Archbishop, to focus reporting back to Synod in 2023 on one Regional strategy as a prototype for review by Synod before developing strategies for the remaining four regions. The South Western Region was chosen as the focus for 2023.
8. The Draft South Western Buildings and Property Strategy (**Draft Strategy**) is presented to Synod as draft for comment. It is available on the SDS website at [www.sds.asn.au/synod-2023-draft-south-western-region-building-and-property-strategy](http://www.sds.asn.au/synod-2023-draft-south-western-region-building-and-property-strategy). Because it is proposed that this be the template for the other four regions, it is appropriate to provide the opportunity for all Synod members to comment.

## Development of the Draft Strategy

9. ACGC collaborated with Bishop Peter Lin to firstly release a detailed discussion paper to Rectors and Wardens of all South Western Region parishes. 25 detailed submissions were received from South Western Region parishes (there are 45 active parishes in the South Western Region).
10. The Draft Strategy was prepared using the most up-to-date, post-COVID population data available from PlanningNSW and SGS Economics. The Diocesan Registrar has provided updated attendance statistics for the year prior to COVID-19 and for 2020 and 2021 (both impacted by COVID). The analysis has been from a perspective of objectively optimising the building/property and ministry (staff) resources in the South Western Region for effective ministry and evangelism over the next 30 years.
11. The South Western Region includes the fastest growing greenfields areas, and some of the fastest growing urban infill areas in the Diocese. The key outcomes of the Draft Strategy identify:
  - (a) greenfield and urban infill parishes requiring parish multiplications due to the expected population growth,
  - (b) urban infill areas requiring upgrades to existing infrastructure,
  - (c) potential parish partnerships where current and future parish populations are significantly smaller than the parish population catchment sizes set in the draft strategy, and
  - (d) under-utilised properties that could be re-purposed or redeveloped as part of the Diocesan Urban Renewal Pilot Program (URPP) or sold, with the proceeds going to church upgrades or the parish multiplications required to meet population demand.
12. Of note is –
  - (a) The analysis shows that the region currently has 45 parishes. Based on 30,000 person parish population catchments, in 2026 the Region would need 44 parishes. However, in 2056, this would increase to 64 parishes.
  - (b) However, the above analysis is a starting point that requires greater nuance. When looking at the number of new parishes that need to be created with parish population catchments between 30,000-40,000, the analysis undertaken indicates a need for 18 new parishes (especially in the South Western growth corridor), while there is the opportunity for closer parish partnerships for at least nine parishes.
  - (c) There are also opportunities to reallocate parish boundaries where more recent transport infrastructure has resulted in travel pattern blockages within parishes.
13. The Draft Strategy provides data-driven suggested strategies and actions for consideration and implementation; these are not legislated by ordinance. The actions will be predominantly coordinated through the South Western Region Mission Areas but with ultimate accountability by the Regional Bishop.
14. This approach will invariably result in the need for more nuanced assessments of the recommendations. The Regional Bishop, via the Mission Areas of South Western Region, will be responsible for these assessments which will influence timing and need to implement the recommendations.

### Next steps

15. Comments and submissions can be provided to the Diocesan Secretary until 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
16. ACGC will then review the comments and make any necessary amendments to the draft strategy and submit to Standing Committee for final approval. Using the lessons learned, ACGC will then commence preparation of the strategies for the remaining four regions. These will be submitted to Synod progressively as they are completed.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

## 2/05 Stipends, Allowances and Benefits for 2024

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- In August 2023, the Standing Committee agreed to apply a methodology for determining the recommended minimum stipend, targeting a projected value of 75% of Average Weekly Earnings (**AWE**).
- As a result, we approved a recommended minimum stipend for a minister at \$76,170 from 1 January 2024, \$79,293 from 1 January 2025 and \$82,465 from 1 January 2026.
- The structure of remuneration package remains unchanged.

### Introduction

1. By resolution 2/05, the Synod requested that the Standing Committee report its findings about stipends and allowances to the Synod each year.
2. It is expected that the advice to ministers and wardens entitled “Guidelines for the Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff for 2024” (the **Guidelines**) will be published in late October this year and will provide details of the recommended stipends, travel and other benefits for ministers, assistant ministers and lay ministers for 2024.
3. A circular, summarising the recommended minimum stipends for 2024, was provided to parishes in August 2023.

### Recommended Minimum Stipends

4. In August 2023, the Standing Committee endorsed a series of Stipend Determination Imperatives and agreed to apply the proposed methodology for determining the recommended minimum stipend, being stipend increases targeting 75% of the projected November 2025 Average Weekly Earnings (**AWE**).
5. In accordance with the above, Standing Committee resolved to set the recommended minimum stipend at –
  - (a) \$76,170 from 1 January 2024 (being an increase of 4.50% from the recommended minimum stipend applying from 1 July 2023),
  - (b) \$79,293 from 1 January 2025 (being an increase of 4.10% from the recommended minimum stipend applying from 1 January 2024), and
  - (c) \$82,465 from 1 January 2026 (being an increase of 4.00% from the recommended minimum stipend applying from 1 January 2025).
6. Accordingly, for 2024 the recommended minimum stipend will be –

	% of Minister's Recommended Minimum Stipend	Jan – Dec'24 Recommended Minimum Stipend \$ pa
Minister	100	76,170
Assistant Ministers, Lay Ministers & Youth and Children's Ministers (Theological degree or Advanced Diploma) –		
5 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent years	95	72,362
3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> year	90	68,553
1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	85	64,745

	<b>% of Minister's Recommended Minimum Stipend</b>	<b>Jan – Dec'24 Recommended Minimum Stipend \$ pa</b>
Youth and Children's Ministers (Diploma) – 7 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent years	85	64,745
4 <sup>th</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> year	75	57,128
1 <sup>st</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	65	49,511

## Remuneration Packaging

7. The maximum level of stipend that may be sacrificed to a Minister's Discretionary Benefits Account (**MDBA**) remains set at 40%, with the member of the ministry staff able to set a lower percentage. Ministry staff may sacrifice an additional amount of stipend (over and above the 40%) to increase superannuation savings. There are now no limitations on the types of benefit that may be provided from the MDBA. Benefits, whether related to the minister's pastoral duties or of a private nature, received in this way are exempt from fringe benefits tax and income tax.

## Superannuation Contributions

8. Contributions on account of superannuation for ministers and assistant ministers are part of the parish ministry costs and will be funded through the *Parochial Cost Recoveries Ordinance 2023*. Superannuation for lay ministers is paid separately. As in previous years, the amount of the superannuation contribution is generally set at approximately 17% of the applicable minimum stipend, accordingly the annual contributions proposed for 2024 are –

	<b>2024</b>
Minister	12,949
Assistant Ministers, Lay Ministers & Youth and Children's Ministers (Theological degree or Advanced Diploma)– 7 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent years	12,949
1 <sup>st</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> year	11,654
Youth and Children's Ministers (Diploma) – 7 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent years	11,007
1 <sup>st</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> year	9,712

## Remuneration for Occasional Services

9. The recommended rates for clergy who take occasional services are –

	<b>2024 \$</b>
For 1 service	90
For 2 or more services in a half day	120
For a whole day	180

10. The following guidelines also apply in relation to remuneration for occasional services –
- Meals should be provided where necessary.
  - As pension benefits may be reduced according to other income received, the recommended rates are open to negotiation.

- (c) Where a minister is invited to take, or assist in, services in a church outside their parochial unit, any payment for services should be made to the parochial unit to which the minister is licensed, rather than to the minister.

## Acting Ministers, Locum Tenens and part time pastoral workers

11. Acting Ministers, Locum Tenens and part time pastoral workers should be remunerated with reference to the relevant full time stipend and benefits on a pro-rata basis (based on a 6 day working week).
12. Provision for ministry related expenses, superannuation, sick, annual and long service leave (on a pro-rata basis) should be provided where appropriate and agreed upon by the worker and parish council.
13. Part time pastoral workers must be included under the parish's workers compensation insurance policy.

## Student Ministers

14. The recommended assistance for student ministers working one full day per week for 2024 is –

	% of Minister's Minimum Stipend	Jan – Dec'24 \$ pa
Studying for a degree	15.0	11,426
Studying for a diploma	12.5	9,521

If a student minister works more than one full day then the rate payable is a pro-rata amount of the full day rate.

15. The following guidelines also apply in relation to the remuneration of student ministers –
- (a) Transport costs (whether private vehicle or public) should be paid by the parochial unit. Where extensive travel is involved consideration should be given to paying for the travel time.
- (b) Where a student minister serves for a half day in addition to a full day, account should be taken of the additional time and cost in travelling and care taken to ensure that the student minister is not disadvantaged by the additional expense.
- (c) Under the *Fair Work Act 2009*, since 1 July 2023 the national minimum wage for adults has been \$23.23 per hour. This means that the recommended stipend allows for no more than 9.4 hours work per week if studying for a degree, and 7.8 hours if studying for a diploma. The national minimum wage will be reviewed next on 1 July 2024.
- (d) Arrangements should be made to ensure student ministers are provided with appropriate hospitality. For example, appropriate breaks should be provided especially in a long working day.
- (e) Preparation time adds to the total time incurred in service for the parochial unit and should be allowed for when the amount of payment is considered.
- (f) Superannuation contributions (at a minimum of 11% from 1 July 2023) are payable on the stipends and salaries of all employees.
- (g) Worker's compensation insurance cover must be arranged by the parish.
- (h) By arrangement with the student minister the parish may agree to pay college fees (tuition, boarding, etc) on behalf of the student minister in lieu of part of the normal remuneration. If such fees are paid they should be considered an exempt fringe benefit provided –
- (i) the student is a ministry candidate, and/or holds the Archbishop's licence, or is an independent candidate undertaking the same course of study as required for a ministry candidate, and
- (ii) the benefit is only applied to paying fees and the provision of accommodation/board.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

# Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023

## Explanatory Report

### Key Points

- The Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023 will amend the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* to –
  - delete the definition of “doctrine” so that the definition in the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985* applies instead of ‘doctrine’ taking its meaning from the 1961 Constitution,
  - update the recommendations that can be made by the Ministry Standards Committee in respect to the relinquishment of and deposition from holy orders to make them consistent with the *Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017*,
  - make it mandatory to suspend a person from ministry if they have been convicted of offences related to child sexual abuse, or are the subject of allegations of child sexual abuse and at risk of having contact with children in the exercise of functions, and
  - make it mandatory for a member of clergy to be deposed from holy orders if they have convictions related to child sexual abuse that were committed while an adult.

### Purpose of the bill

1. The purpose of the Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023 (**Bill**) is to amend the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* (**MSO**) in the manner described in the Key Points.

### Recommendations

2. That Synod receive this report.
3. That Synod pass the Bill as an ordinance of the Synod.

### Explanation

#### Definition of ‘doctrine’ (clause 2(a))

4. The MSO defined ‘doctrine’ as having the same meaning as in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia (in the Schedule to the *Anglican Church of Australia Constitution Act 1961* (NSW)) (**Constitution**).
5. The majority opinions of the Appellate Tribunal on the Primate’s References regarding the Wangaratta Blessing Services and the Newcastle Discipline Ordinance (11 November 2020) held that the meaning of ‘doctrine’ in the Constitution is limited to those matters which are required of necessity to be believed for salvation.
6. The Standing Committee resolved in March 2021 its view that the Majority Opinion is wrong in both law and theology. Notwithstanding this and that the interpretation given to ‘doctrine’ in the Majority Opinion arises on in relation to its meaning in the Constitution, it was considered necessary to expressly define its meaning for the purposes of the ordinances of the Diocese of Sydney and to expressly exclude the narrow definition espoused by the Appellate Tribunal.

7. The following definition of 'doctrine' has been inserted into the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985*, which now applies to all ordinances of the Diocese unless the contrary intention appears within the relevant ordinance –

The teaching of the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney on any question of faith. The sources of Doctrine include –

- (a) canonical scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,
- (b) the Christian faith as professed by the Church of Christ from primitive times, and in particular as set forth in the creeds known as the Nicene Creed and the Apostles' Creed,
- (c) the commands, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of Christ,
- (d) the book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal and the Thirty-Nine Articles.

For the avoidance of doubt, "Doctrine" includes both faith and practice and is not limited to its meaning in the majority opinions of the Appellate Tribunal on the Primate's References re Wangaratta Blessing Services and the Newcastle Discipline Ordinance (11 November 2020).

Doctrine may be declared in statements made by –

- (i) the Synod of the Diocese with the concurrence of the Archbishop, or
- (ii) the Archbishop-in-Council,

provided that such statements are consistent with the sources of Doctrine in paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above.

8. The word 'doctrine' appears in only one place in the MSO, in subclause 6(1)(f). This provides that misconduct does not include "public statements, acts or practices made or done in good faith for a proper purpose that are within the standards and doctrines of the Church in the Diocese".
9. The current definition of 'doctrine' in the MSO expressly references the definition in the Constitution. Deleting the definition of 'doctrine' in clause 4(1) of the MSO will mean that the definition in the *Interpretation Ordinance 1985* applies instead since there would be no contrary intention for another meaning to apply in the MSO.

### Changes consequent to adoption of the *Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017* (clause 2(e)-(f))

10. Subclause 41(1) of the MSO sets out the recommendations that can be made by the Ministry Standards Committee (**MSC**) in respect to a complaint.
11. Presently these include –
- (f) that the respondent resign from office or employment, request relinquishment of holy orders or request voluntary deposition from holy orders, with such admissions and other conditions as the MSC considers appropriate in all the circumstances;
12. The *Relinquishment of Holy Orders Ordinance 1994* provided for voluntary deposition from Holy Orders. However, this Ordinance was repealed when the *Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017 (2017 Canon)* was adopted by the Synod in 2017.
13. A member of clergy can now relinquish their orders by resigning all clerical licences and appointments in the relevant order and executing an instrument of relinquishment in or to the effect of the form set out in the 2017 Canon.
14. Deposition occurs pursuant to the sentence of a tribunal or following the recommendation or determination of a professional standards body and is put into effect by the execution by the Archbishop of an instrument of deposition in or to the effect of the form set out in the 2017 Canon.
15. The 2017 Canon raises some difficulties in relation to the concept of 'voluntary deposition'. Deposition is provided for in clause 6 of the 2017 Canon as follows –
- 6. The deposition of a person by a bishop pursuant to the sentence of a tribunal or following the recommendation or determination of a professional standards body

shall be effected by the execution by the relevant bishop of an instrument of deposition in or to the effect of the form in Schedule 3.

16. To be a 'professional standards body' for this purpose, the body must have the power to recommend or determine that a person in Holy Orders be deposed. The 2017 Canon does not engage with the concept of 'voluntary deposition' and assumes it is imposed on the member of clergy.
17. It is desirable that deposition can occur following a recommendation of the MSC in a circumstance where the respondent accepts that recommendation. The alternative would be to require a deposition to go through the Ministry Standards Board (**MSB**) even though the respondent does not contest the recommendation.
18. The Bill will amend subclause 41(1)(f) to make it consistent with the 2017 Canon with respect to relinquishment and to also provide for the MSC to recommend that a respondent consent to deposition from holy orders. To ensure the recommendation of the MSC has effect for the purposes of clause 6 of the 2017 Canon, the Bill will also insert a new subclause 41(3) to provide that if a person does consent to deposition, that the MSC's recommendation is a recommendation for the purposes of this clause and that the MSC has power to make that recommendation.

#### Mandatory suspension for allegations related to child sexual abuse (clause 2(b)-(d))

19. Recommendation 16.52 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is as follows –

16.52 – All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, if a complaint of child sexual abuse against a person in religious ministry is plausible, and there is a risk that person may come into contact with children in the course of their ministry, the person be stood down from ministry while the complaint is investigated.
20. In effect this is a recommendation that suspension from ministry be mandatory if there is an allegation of child sexual abuse.
21. Action to implement this recommendation was not taken prior to this point because the Professional Standards Commission of the General Synod was working on a proposal for mandatory suspension. However, subclause 19(2) of the MSO already makes it mandatory for the Director of Safe Ministry (**the Director**) to recommend a suspension order if a complaint involves allegations of 'serious child-related conduct', is not false, vexatious or misconceived and there is a risk that the respondent may come into contact with children in the course of their functions.
22. The Professional Standards Commission's consideration resulted in the *Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Suspension) Canon 2022 (MS Canon)* which will, if it receives the requisite assents from diocesan synods, amend the Constitution to make it mandatory to suspend a bishop if there is a charge before the Special Tribunal involves a 'sexual offence relating to a child'. There is a Bill before the Synod to assent to the MS Canon (the General Synod – Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Suspension) Canon 2022 Assenting Ordinance 2023).
23. The MS Canon does not provide for mandatory suspension in the case of charges before a diocesan tribunal or a complaint under the MSO.
24. It is not clear why the MS Canon does not also include amendments to section 61 of the Constitution to provide for mandatory suspension where there are charges before a diocesan tribunal that involve a 'sexual offence relating to a child'. It is doubtful that mandatory suspension in respect to such proceedings before the Diocesan Tribunal can be required by amending the *Diocesan Tribunal Ordinance 2017* because section 61(2) the Constitution confers a discretion on the bishop of the relevant diocese with respect to suspension. Removing this discretion would require an amendment to the Constitution.
25. Typically, matters proceed under the administrative process in the MSO rather than under the disciplinary process of the Diocesan Tribunal. The Synod can provide for mandatory suspension in respect to complaints involving a 'sexual offence relating to a child' under the MSO.
26. The Bill will expand clause 19(2) of the MSO to also make it mandatory for the Director to recommend a suspension order if a respondent has been convicted of a 'sexual offence relating to a child' regardless of whether the respondent has contact with children.



27. The Bill will also change the existing requirement in clause 19(2) in relation to allegations of serious child-related conduct that the complaint not be “not false, vexatious or misconceived” to a requirement that “the Director considers the complaint is plausible”. This will better align with recommendation 16.52 of the Royal Commission. If there is reason to believe that a complaint is false, vexatious or misconceived, the proper way to address that is through a referral to the MSC under clause 16(1) that the Director decline to deal with the complaint.
28. A definition of ‘sexual offence relating to a child’ will also be inserted in clause 4 of the MSO. This definition replicates the definition used in the MS Canon.
29. The amendment to subclause 20(a) will make it mandatory for the relevant Church authority to suspend the respondent if a recommendation by the Director is mandatory under subclause 19(2).

#### Mandatory deposition for convictions related to child sexual abuse (clauses 2(g)-(h))

30. Recommendation 16.56(b) of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is as follows:
  - 16.56 – Any person in religious ministry who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should:
    - b. in the case of Anglican clergy, be deposed from holy orders.
31. Action to implement this recommendation was also not taken prior to this point because the Professional Standards Commission of the General Synod was working on a proposal for mandatory deposition.
32. The *Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Deposition) Canon 2022 (MD Canon)* is before the Synod for assent (the General Synod – Constitution Amendment (Mandatory Deposition) Canon 2022 Assenting Ordinance 2023). If the MD Canon receives the requisite assents from diocesan synods, it will amend the Constitution to make deposition mandatory if a diocesan tribunal is satisfied that a person has been convicted of a ‘sexual offence relating to a child’.
33. As noted above, typically matters proceed under the MSO rather than through the Diocesan Tribunal. It is therefore necessary to amend the MSO to provide for mandatory deposition.
34. The Bill will amend the MSO to make it mandatory for both the MSC and the MSB to recommend deposition from Holy Orders if satisfied that the respondent has been convicted of a ‘sexual offence relating to a child’.
35. The MD Canon limits mandatory deposition in the context of the Diocesan Tribunal to convictions for a sexual offence relating to a child committed while a member of the clergy. Recommendation 16.56 of the Royal Commission is not limited to offences committed while a member of clergy (or limited at all). There is no explanation for the limitation to the MD Canon in the explanatory report.
36. The Bill takes a different approach by limiting mandatory deposition to offences committed while an adult. There is no apparent reason from a safe ministry perspective why an offence committed as an adult following ordination should be treated differently to an offence committed as an adult prior to ordination. However, there may be additional factors to consider in relation to conduct committed as a child which mean that deposition in such instance should be discretionary rather than mandatory.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
Diocesan Secretary

14 August 2023

# Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023

No. \_\_\_\_\_, 2023

## Long Title

An Ordinance to amend the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*.

The Synod of the Diocese of Sydney Ordains as follows.

### 1. Name

This Ordinance is the Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 Amendment Ordinance 2023.

### 2. Amendment

The *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* is amended as follows –

- 5 (a) delete the definition of “doctrine” in subclause 4(1),
- (b) insert the following new definition in subclause 4(1) –
- “sexual offence relating to a child” means —**
- (i) sexual activity by a person against, with or in the presence of a child, or
- 10 (ii) the possession, production or distribution of any form of child pornography.’,
- (c) in clause 19 –
- (i) number the text of the clause as subclause (1),
- (ii) delete subclause 19(c), and
- (iii) insert a new subclause 19(2) as follows –
- 15 (2) The Director must recommend that the respondent is suspended if, after giving the respondent the opportunity to be heard under subclause 19(1)(a), the Director is satisfied that –
- (a) the respondent has been convicted under the laws of the Commonwealth, State or Territory or under the laws of some other
- 20 country that are equivalent to a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory of a sexual offence relating to a child, or
- (b) the complaint involves allegations of serious child-related conduct, and –
- (i) the Director considers the complaint is plausible, and
- 25 (ii) there is a risk that the respondent may come into contact with children in the course of their functions as a church worker.’,
- (d) insert the following words at the end of subclause 20(a) before the semi-colon –
- ‘and must give effect to the recommendation if the recommendation was mandatory under subclause 19(2)’,
- 30 (e) in subclause 41(1)(f) substitute the words “request relinquishment of holy orders or request voluntary deposition from holy orders” with the following –
- ‘resign clerical licences and appointments, execute an instrument of relinquishment in accordance with the *Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017* or consent to deposition from holy orders’,
- 35 (f) insert a new subclause 41(3) as follows –
- ‘(3) If a recommendation is made under subclause 41(1)(f) and the respondent consents to deposition from Holy Orders, the MSC’s recommendation is a recommendation of deposition of a person by a bishop for the purposes of clause 6 of the *Holy Orders (Removal from Exercise of Ministry) Canon 2017* and the MSC has power to make that recommendation.’,
- 40

(g) insert a new clause 41A as follows –

**‘41A. Mandatory deposition – MSC**

5 Where the MSC is satisfied that a church worker who is a member of clergy has been convicted under the laws of the Commonwealth, State or Territory or under the laws of some other country that are equivalent to a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory of a sexual offence relating to a child committed while an adult, the MSC must make a recommendation under subclause 41(1)(f) that the church worker consent to deposition from Holy Orders.’, and

(h) insert a new clause 49A as follows –

**‘49A. Mandatory deposition – Board**

10 Where the Board is satisfied that a church worker who is a member of clergy has been convicted under the laws of the Commonwealth, State or Territory or under the laws of some other country that are equivalent to a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory of a sexual offence relating to a child committed while  
15 an adult, the Board must make a recommendation under subclause 49(1)(m) that the church worker be deposed from Holy Orders.’.

I Certify that the Ordinance as printed is in accordance with the Ordinance as reported.

Chair of Committee

I Certify that this Ordinance was passed by the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney on  
2023.

Secretary

I Assent to this Ordinance.

Archbishop of Sydney

/ /2023

## Domestic Violence Response Monitoring Committee: Progress Report

### 23/18 Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines

### 13/22 National Anglican Family Violence Research project

(A report from the Domestic Violence Response Monitoring Committee.)

#### Purpose

1. To provide a progress report to the Synod from the Domestic Violence Response Monitoring Committee, on behalf of the Standing Committee.
2. To recommend revisions to the Anglican Diocese of Sydney's policy document: *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines*.

#### Recommendations

3. Synod notes this report.
4. Synod, noting the report 'Domestic Violence Response Monitoring Committee Progress Report, adopt the updated *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines* as a policy of the Synod.

#### Background

5. When the diocesan Policy and Guidelines were adopted in 2018, Synod authorised the Standing Committee to make amendments to the Policy provided any amendment made by the Standing Committee is made in consultation with the Professional Standards Unit and the Anglicare Domestic Violence Advisor (unless such proposal to amend is referred to Synod by any 3 members of the Standing Committee).
6. At that time, the Synod (by Resolution 23/18) asked Standing Committee to review the Domestic Abuse Policy and Good Practice Guidelines after four years' operation and provide a report on the outcome of the review to the first ordinary session of the 53rd Synod in 2023.
7. In June 2021 Standing Committee also asked the Monitoring Committee to review the Policy in light of the initial *National Anglican Family Violence Project Research Reports* and to report on any gaps in current policy and practice and to make recommendations.
8. Later that year, the full and final National Anglican Family Violence Project (**NAFVP**) research was released. It comprised 4 reports. All can easily be accessed on the General Synod website.
9. Our Monitoring Committee report to Synod in 2022 interacted at some length with this research and its conclusions, indicating both some limitations and also some further areas of consideration in light of it.
10. In 2021 we also commenced our policy review, utilising the assistance of the Diocesan Researcher at the time. Specifically, our approach was to:
  - Invite a panel of relevant stakeholders to assist in the review,
  - Request written feedback on our Policy and Guidelines document from a panel of relevant stakeholders, in light of the NAFVP research and "Ten Commitments", and
  - Review feedback themes via a roundtable discussion with stakeholders.

11. The review stakeholders included the following persons:
  - Anglicare’s Family and Domestic Violence Advisor,
  - The PSU’s Chaplain,
  - A person representing victims and survivors (located via the PSU Chaplain),
  - A parish clergyperson,
  - A ministry wife,
  - A Christian of another Bible-believing denomination with relevant experience,
  - A Christian medical practitioner with relevant experience,
  - The CEO of ADM (whose Project Officer also joined us),
  - The Principal of Youthworks College,
  - A representative of SDS Legal,
  - (Moore College was unable to nominate a representative at the time).
12. Extensive written feedback on the existing Policy and Guidelines was received from all stakeholders and was collated by the Diocesan Researcher. We then reviewed feedback and discussed key themes emerging via roundtable video conference in November 2021, with most stakeholders in attendance.
13. The impact of COVID and a new appointment for one of the members of the Monitoring Committee delayed work on the updating policy in light of the review feedback.
14. Nevertheless, at Synod in 2022, we reported, without pre-empting final recommendations, that a number of wider key themes were identified, though not all would fit neatly into a policy document.
15. Resolutions passed at Synod in September 2022 also:
  - Welcomed the "Before it Starts" program produced jointly by Youthworks and Anglicare with its goal of preventing domestic abuse and promoting safe and respectful relationships in our churches, as a free, four-week, biblically-engaged, primary prevention program for youth groups (9/22),
  - Noted limited uptake of the *Know Domestic Abuse* online training course, prepared by Anglicare and offered by what is now called the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry and urged all Rectors to encourage all pastoral staff and lay leaders in their churches to complete the course if they have not already done so (10/22), and
  - Again noted the reports of the National Anglican Family Violence Research Project and the Ten Commitments for Prevention and Response to Domestic and Family Violence, and asked the Monitoring Committee to respond to these documents, as part of the wider review of our Synod’s existing policy in time for Synod in 2023 (13/22).

## Recommendations for Policy Revisions

16. The Monitoring Committee has now considered both the detailed feedback of suggestions for amending of the existing policy documents and the wider themes identified by the policy review.
17. Our approach has been wherever possible to accept suggestions for amendment to the Policy and Guidelines from the review panel members, either in full, or by appropriate modification suitable to our context.
18. We have also interacted with the NAFVP research and the “Ten Commitments” and found many useful suggestions arising from this review, which have shaped further changes we recommend to the Policy. For example, this has led to –
  - an increased emphasis on primary prevention (Commitment 1.3), on training being repeated and renewed (Commitment 8.3), along with stronger recommendations to parishes for local action (e.g., Commitments 6.2 & 6.3),

- additional specific materials that reflect on the impact of trauma, on power and control dynamics (Commitments 4.2 & 4.3), and on ways domestic abuse can impact groups such as the culturally and linguistically diverse (Commitment 2.3), and people with disabilities.
19. However due to the extensive policy and resourcing work already done, our view continues to be that there is no need for our Synod to adopt the “Ten Commitments” as an additional policy or position statement. Although the “Ten Commitments” were not insensitive to the varied theological approaches that exist in the Anglican Church of Australia, their expression, at some points, does not necessarily comprise an easy fit with the evangelical theological and ministry approach generally prevailing within our Diocese.
20. Prompted in part by the Ten Commitments (e.g. commitment 5.2), the Monitoring Committee has also benefitted from consultation, with members of the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples’ Ministry Committee (**SAIPMC**). There was further useful consultation with two female ministry leaders from local Indigenous communities.
21. Key draft changes have also been further checked with Lynda Dunstan, Anglicare’s Family and Domestic Violence Advisor and with Belinda Burn, the Chaplain of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry. Their assistance has been invaluable in ensuring our Policy, Guidelines and Resources are more up to date on the latest research and are also even more sensitive to victims and survivors and any children they have.
22. The key changes are as follows:
- An updated preface from our new Archbishop.
  - Clarification as to why we have chosen to retain the term “victim” as our most common way of referring to those who have experienced domestic abuse, although sometimes we will refer to “survivor”.
  - An updated definition of domestic abuse, emphasising aspects of control and fear, and including a wider variety of categories of such abuse.
  - Emphasis on the need to ensure provision of training for ministry workers and others in the areas both of prevention and response by appropriately qualified professionals or programs, and with appropriate ongoing ‘refresher’ training.
  - Clergy and parish councils are asked to take further steps both in primary prevention of and response to those affected by domestic abuse, including the possibility of contact with local agencies and services.
  - Our flow chart has been tweaked and given even greater, hence earlier, prominence in our policy documents.
  - Guidelines include several helpful informed opinions from Anglicare’s Domestic Violence Advisor.
  - Guidelines recognise better the very non-linear, “long road out”, not only for victims, where patience to go at the victim’s pace is even more emphasised, but also often for carers who walk with them. In small ways this reflects greater awareness of the impact of trauma.
  - Guidelines are more careful about the impact of domestic abuse on children, and also clarify that referral in such cases does not mean automatic removal.
  - Guidelines are more explicit about complicating factors for those with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and for people living with disability, mental illness or other health issues.
  - Guidelines are more careful about managing information around and care of victims and alleged perpetrators, especially where they remain in the same parish community (including awareness of online connections).
  - Guidelines encourage more vigilance in terms of responding to alleged perpetrators including attention to possible grooming behaviour.
  - Guidelines provide updated information about the Bishop Protocol and the Ministry Spouse Support Fund for ministry families affected by domestic abuse.
  - The need to seek advice from the ODSM or the Anglicare Domestic Violence Advisor or other professionals is underlined even more often.
  - The number of appendices has been reduced, by removing the appendices including “A Letter that Made me Think”, “Public Statements by diocesan leaders on the topic of Domestic Abuse,

which is now becoming out of date, and a digest of Synod resolutions related to Domestic Abuse. Nonetheless, an updated digest of such resolutions is attached as Attachment 1 to this report, so that it remains clearly in our historical record.

- We have updated the Appendix giving more expansive description of domestic abuse in light of our updated definition.
- We have reordered the Appendices to give greater prominence to the Doctrine Commission's report on "The Use and Misuse of Scripture with Regard to Domestic Abuse".
- We have added a Cycle of Abuse diagram as a second visual aid for understanding the patterns of domestic abuse.
- We have updated our Appendix 4 on Domestic Abuse Facts, in ways that have simplified some material, but expanded on how abuse may impact minority groups such as culturally or religiously diverse communities, Indigenous communities and men as victims. It also supplies information on social factors that contribute, the way perpetrators may invite collusion (sometimes called grooming) and on the impact of trauma.
- We have updated the Appendix on Divorce and Remarriage, referring to the Doctrine Commission's more recent report, as well as the statement about how such matters are handled by the Archbishop when that report was handed down. This is still current today.
- With the assistance of SDS Legal we have updated the Appendix touching on legal situations regarding domestic violence in NSW.
- Changes to *Faithfulness in Service* have been noted.
- The model parish policy has been updated to reflect the new policy wording being recommended at the front of the document.
- Changes have been made throughout to update the terminology from 'Professional Standards Unit / PSU' to 'Office of the Director of Safe Ministry / ODSM'.

## Other Matters

23. The Monitoring Committee is also able to report the following about engagement with diocesan resources, from the time each has been available, as at May 2023:
  - Payments from the Ministry Spouse Support Fund, since its inception, total \$131,460.97.
  - 147 people have completed our online training Know Domestic Abuse, with another 70 in progress. It should be noted there has been no publicity for the course for some time, except via a Synod resolution, and it is also overdue for an update.
  - The services of Anglicare's Family and Domestic Violence Advisor been accessed for advice approximately 200 times by parish ministers or other persons.
  - The Family and Domestic Violence Advisor has run training seminars regarding domestic violence for over 30 churches and ministry teams, as well as Moore College, Youthworks College and Anglican Deaconess Ministries.
24. The Monitoring Committee is especially mindful of monitoring closely the 'take-up' level of these voluntary training opportunities, and prays for further progress in this area.
25. A separate motion will be moved encouraging parish councils to adopt the revised model parish domestic abuse policy and utilise available resources.

ARCHDEACON KARA HARTLEY

DEAN SANDY GRANT

14 August 2023

## **Synod Resolutions related to Domestic Abuse**

For the historical record, please note the following relevant resolutions of the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, current to the end of 2022.

Any resolutions of Synod, although not carrying the force of denominational law, express our peak representative 'position statements' on particular issues at particular points of time.

### **37/07 Biblical pattern of marriage**

Synod –

- (a) affirms that the relationship of loving, sacrificial leadership of a husband and the intelligent, voluntary submission of a wife is the Biblical pattern of marriage, and
- (b) totally rejects the use of this Biblical pattern to justify any form of domestic abuse, and
- (c) totally rejects all forms of domestic abuse, and
- (d) expresses its concern for those children, women and men, who are victims of domestic abuse, and
- (e) calls on Christian husbands and wives to use their God-given responsibilities for the good of their families, and
- (f) calls on ministers to teach congregations the Biblical model for marriage and also to teach against domestic abuse.

(Mrs Lesley Ramsay 25/09/07)

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

Synod requests Moore College and Ministry Training and Development, in consultation with the Safe Ministry Board and appropriate experts as required, having reviewed the input they already provide, to investigate and, if needed, develop an effective approach to educating ordinands and clergy in regards to domestic violence and how to respond when it comes up as an issue in marriage (and other relationships).

In such training, consideration ought to be given to ensuring that upholding the Bible's good teaching on submission and sacrificial love – both in preaching and teaching, and in marriage education and counselling – is not easily twisted as a cover for abuse.

Synod requests that Moore College and Ministry Training and Development report back with a progress report by the next session of Synod.

(Canon Sandy Grant 16/10/2013)

### **24/16 Domestic Violence**

Synod –

- (a) acknowledges that domestic abuse continues to be a significant social problem both inside and outside the church;
- (b) gives thanks for the work of the Domestic Violence Response Task Force and calls on them to continue their work – in particular that of developing policy and pastoral guidelines to recommend to Standing Committee and make recommendations about education – as expeditiously as possible;
- (c) calls on Standing Committee to consider providing funding for the Task Force sufficient to expedite its work and particularly the work of interviewing and caring for victims;
- (d) calls upon all clergy, church workers and parish councils to read the Task Force's 2016 progress report to Synod and to familiarise themselves with the headline definition and expansive description of domestic violence adopted by the Task Force;
- (e) notes that clergy and church workers who are domestic abusers are in breach of standards expressed in Faithfulness in Service;
- (f) encourages victims of domestic abuse by clergy or church workers to speak to the Professional Standards Unit;



- (g) asks the Task Force, and the Discipline Ordinance 2006 Review Committee, to consider changes to the necessary ordinances which would allow victims of domestic abuse, who have brought the abuse to the attention of church-workers who have their pastoral oversight and who feel that they have received negligent, callous or otherwise improper advice or treatment by those with pastoral oversight, to have complaints referred to the Professional Standards Unit;
- (h) looks forward to the inclusion of education in the area of domestic violence in 2017 via the PSU's compulsory Faithfulness in Service training sessions for clergy and paid church workers, and while the Task Force's pastoral guidelines are being developed encourages ministers, whenever they receive an allegation of domestic abuse, to consider contacting the PSU for advice on the best practices for pastoral care;
- (i) encourages clergy and church workers to preach and speak against domestic violence, again rejecting the twisting of Scripture to justify abuse of any kind, and to make pastoral enquiries when meeting with married people;
- (j) requests the Task Force to report again, no later than next Synod; and
- (k) expects that the diocesan response to domestic violence will go beyond the ambit and life of the Task Force,

and prays for the protection, healing and support of victims and survivors of domestic violence within our churches; for wisdom and insight, courage and compassion for clergy and church workers in providing pastoral responses to people in such situations; and for the continued work of the Task Force.

(Canon Sandy Grant 12/10/2016)

### **17/17 Grief and apology in regards to domestic abuse**

That this Synod grieves with victims and survivors of domestic abuse, and prays for their healing and recovery. We give thanks to God for those women and men, clergy and lay people, who have faithfully supported, cared for and protected such victims in our churches and communities.

We grieve that God's good gift of marriage can be distorted and dishonoured through the sin of perpetrators. We pray for their repentance and restoration to faithful living under Christ.

We also deeply regret that domestic abuse has occurred among those who attend our churches, and even among some in leadership. We apologise for those times our teaching and pastoral care have failed adequately to support victims and call perpetrators to account.

(Canon Sandy Grant 10/10/2017)

### **32/17 Assistance for spouses and families of clergy and lay stipendiary workers where separation has occurred due to domestic violence**

In light of its wholehearted acceptance of the Provisional Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse, and its deeply sincere expression on 10 October 2017 of grief, regret and sorrow to victims and survivors of domestic abuse, Synod –

- (i) acknowledges the responsibility of the Anglican Church of Australia to examine its ordination candidates to ensure that they are fit to enter Holy Orders,
- (ii) acknowledges the responsibility of the Anglican Church of Australia to ensure that its clergy are fit to remain in Holy Orders,
- (iii) acknowledges the responsibility of the Anglican Church of Australia to ensure that its lay stipendiary workers are fit to be licenced to work in churches and to remain in this work,
- (iv) accepts the theological statements in the Provisional Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse that speak of the circumstances when it is right for the victims of domestic abuse to separate from their spouses and not be reconciled,
- (v) acknowledges that a key reason why domestic abuse victims might find it difficult to separate from their spouses is because of potential financial hardship (especially where children are involved),
- (vi) acknowledges that the family of clergy and lay stipendiary workers live in locations where the relevant ministry worker is licenced to minister, rather than around their natural support networks (e.g. family and close friends), and that this can make it even more difficult for victims of domestic abuse to separate from their spouses,

and therefore requests –

- (a) that Standing Committee, as a matter of urgency and in consultation with the Professional Standards Unit, create a generously provisioned long-term operating fund which has the purpose of assisting spouses of clergy and lay stipendiary workers who have been or will be left in financial hardship as a result of their need to separate from their spouse due to domestic abuse,
- (b) that the policy which is created to administer the fund proposed in paragraph (a) provide a way for funds to be distributed quickly to those who are in need,
- (c) that Anglican Schools Corporation schools have short to medium term bursaries available to assist the families of clergy and lay stipendiary workers where separation has occurred due to domestic abuse, and
- (d) that Anglicare give priority for emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay stipendiary workers where separation has occurred due to domestic abuse.

(The Rev Mark Tough 16/10/2017)

### **6/18 Appreciation for the Anglicare Family and Domestic Violence Advisor**

Synod acknowledges the work being done by Ms Lynda Dunstan, the Anglicare Family and Domestic Violence Advisor, and –

- (a) gives thanks to God for –
  - (i) the 13 training programs that Ms Dunstan has delivered to churches,
  - (ii) the support that Ms Dunstan has provided, in conjunction with the Rev Cath Wynn Jones of the PSU, to ministry wives who have been victims of domestic abuse,
  - (iii) Ms Dunstan's exploration of the possibility of establishing a support group for ministry wives addressing areas specifically associated with spiritual abuse,
  - (iv) the training Ms Dunstan has provided for those involved in ESL ministry, and
- (b) encourages churches to make contact with Ms Dunstan as part of their ongoing training and development in understanding of Domestic Abuse and implementation of the Domestic Abuse policy in their churches.

(The Rev Mark Tough 15/10/2018)

### **18/18 The nature of marriage**

Synod, noting that it has been sadly aware for some years of the misuse by some husbands of the biblical teaching on marriage to justify abuse of their wives, requests the Diocesan Doctrine Commission –

- (a) to acknowledge the extreme urgency of addressing prevention of domestic abuse of women within our Diocesan churches; and therefore
- (b) to bring to Synod in 2019, and no later, its conclusions on the referral to it, by Standing Committee, concerning how “the Biblical material on..... the nature of marriage, including the relevance of submission and headship, intersects with domestic abuse, its prevention, and the care of victims in our minds”.

(Mrs Susan Hooke 17/10/2018)

### **23/18 Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines**

Synod, having passed the Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse as a policy of the Synod –

- (a) requests Standing Committee to ensure that the “Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines” be professionally laid out and prepared for publication and distribution to all ministers and parish councils for their attention, along with assistant ministers and lay ministers, with a request that parishioners be made aware of the policy,
- (b) requests that all parishes be encouraged to consider adopting the suggested parish policy statement (from the Resource section) as their own parish policy on domestic abuse, or to revise their existing policy in light of revisions to the Synod’s “Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines”,

- (c) authorises the Standing Committee to make amendments to the Policy unless before such amendment is made, any 3 members of the Standing Committee request in writing that the amendment be referred to the Synod and provided any amendment made by the Standing Committee is –
  - (i) made in consultation with the Professional Standards Unit and the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser, and
  - (ii) reported to the next ordinary session of the Synod, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to review the “Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines” after four years’ operation following the passing of the Policy by the Synod and provide a report on the outcome of the review to the 1st ordinary session of the 53rd Synod in 2023.

(Canon Sandy Grant 17/10/2018)

### **50/18 Remarriage of divorced persons**

Synod, noting that it is the prerogative of the Archbishop or a Regional Bishop, in accordance with the laws of this Church, whether or not to approve the remarriage of a divorced person, requests the Archbishop and Regional Bishops to consider approving the remarriage of a divorced person, where that person has been abused physically or emotionally by their former spouse.

(Ms Lyn Bannerman 23/10/2018)

### **35/19 Archbishop's Letter regarding Domestic Abuse and Remarriage**

This Synod notes and gives thanks to the Archbishop for his letter regarding Domestic Abuse and Remarriage, dated 29 July 2019, which is his response to Resolution 50/18 on this matter.

(Ms Lyn Bannerman 16/10/2019)

### **3/21 Domestic Abuse Leave for Clergy**

Synod, noting the report “Domestic abuse leave for clergy” –

- (a) agrees in principle that provision be made by parishes to provide leave to members of clergy who are unable to perform their duties because they are experiencing domestic abuse or dealing with the impact of experiencing domestic abuse; and
- (b) requests the Standing Committee to amend its annual Guidelines for the Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff to provide for domestic abuse leave for clergy on this basis, with the changes effective 1 July 2021.

(Archdeacon Kara Hartley 3/05/2021)

### **9/22 Addressing domestic violence “Before it Starts”**

Synod welcomes the “Before it Starts” program with its goal of preventing domestic abuse and promoting safe and respectful relationships in our churches. Synod thanks Anglicare and Youthworks for their partnership in developing this free, four-week, biblically-engaged, primary prevention program for youth groups. Synod commends it to parishes and encourages ministers and synod representatives to draw it to the attention of their youth leaders so they might consider using in their youth group programming. Synod also notes the willingness of Anglicare and Youthworks to receive feedback, which could help shape future amendments to the program.

(Dean Sandy Grant 12/09/2022)

### **10/22 Know Domestic Abuse online training**

Synod, noting the provision to parishes of the *Know Domestic Abuse* online training course, and further noting that there had only been 161 enrolments in the course during the reporting period covered by the Safe Ministry Board’s report to this session of Synod –

acknowledges the need for all church leaders to understand and regularly reconsider –

- (i) the needs of domestic abuse victims in our churches,

- (ii) the responsibilities leaders have to pastor them (and their abusers), and
- (iii) the resources available to help,

commends the *Know Domestic Abuse* course to the parishes of the Diocese, and urges all Rectors to encourage all pastoral staff and lay leaders in their churches to complete the course if they have not already done so.

(Archdeacon Simon Flinders 12/09/2022)

### **13/22 National Anglican Family Violence Research project**

Synod, noting the reports of the National Anglican Family Violence Research Project (**NAFVP**) tabled at the recent General Synod –

- (i) National Anglican Family Violence Research Report,
  - (ii) NAFVP Prevalence Study Report,
  - (iii) NAFVP Clergy and Lay Leaders Study Report, and
  - (iv) NAFVP Experience Study Report,
- (a) notes the 28 findings of the Research Project,
  - (b) continues to lament the violence which has been suffered by some of our members and continues to repent of the part we have played in allowing an environment where violence went unaddressed,
  - (c) notes the adoption the Ten Commitments for Prevention and Response to Domestic and Family Violence, and the creation of the Families and Cultures Commission by the General Synod as a means to help drive change in the national church, and

refers the material to the Domestic Violence Monitoring Committee, and requests that the Committee bring a report to the first session of the 53rd Synod responding to the matters raised in the Reports and recommendations on strategies proposed by the Ten Commitments, as part of the wider review of our Synod's existing "Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines".

(Dr Karin Sowada 12/09/2022)

# Anglican Diocese of Sydney

## *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines*

### ***A Word from the Archbishop***

God is love. The Bible reveals that God exists as a fellowship of love among the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that he is a God who shares his love with all people. As the recipients of his love, he has called us to love him in return, with all our heart, soul and mind, and to love our neighbour as ourselves. God has also designed marriage as an expression of the covenant love between one man and one woman, and the proper sphere for the expression of love in sexual intimacy, and so that children might be born and brought up in the fear and knowledge of the Lord. Moreover, as the Scriptures remind us, marriage signifies and represents the union of Christ and his Church.

Such a holy union is worthy of great honour and respect, especially by the husband and the wife, but also by society as a whole. As the love of God has joined us to himself, so the Bible instructs husbands to love their wives and wives to love their husbands. God's word condemns unloving behaviour, and especially the misuse of power to control or exploit others. Abuse in all its forms is explicitly forbidden, as it is contrary to the nature of God and the love that he demands of us all. Yet sadly, not all husbands love their wives as Christ loved the Church, nor do all wives love their husbands as they should.

For these reasons, we are concerned for relationships where domestic abuse or family violence is present. As Sydney Anglican Churches, we wish to address this issue honestly and transparently and we wish to extend our compassion, care and assistance to those whose safety is at risk because of domestic abuse. This document provides a framework and practical encouragement in primary prevention of such abuse. I am especially grateful to the many women and men, especially survivors, who have generously assisted in the formulation of these guidelines. Their contribution has been invaluable. We are committed to continuing to listen and learn from their experience.

The recommendations made in this document include a framework for providing specialist support services which can be points of referral to ensure safety and protection for all. It also suggests how we might be better equipped and resourced in identifying and supporting victims of abuse in order to provide the pastoral care that is both appropriate and necessary.

This is a personally and spiritually demanding area with which to engage. Nevertheless, we are committed to doing so, so that we are equipped to respond to people in need of informed care and assistance, and so that we might live as children of light, seeking to honour Christ as Lord and Saviour in every community, especially the family.

KANISHKA RAFFEL  
**Archbishop of Sydney**

## ***Aim***

This document sets out the Domestic Abuse Policy and Good Practice Guidelines of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, as evidence and expression of the Church's commitment to address and respond effectively to domestic abuse both within its own community and in the wider society.

The aim of this policy and these guidelines is to inform, direct and equip people working at a local level so that they can offer the most appropriate care in circumstances of domestic abuse.

This includes not only those who are called upon by victims or alleged or known perpetrators to hear their story, but also those in pastoral ministries who have a responsibility (alongside all church members) to build communities that prevent domestic abuse and actively seek to respond when they identify concerns.

## ***Scope***

This policy applies to all parishes of the Diocese of Sydney, their clergy and church workers. It is also commended to all Anglican organisations associated with the Diocese of Sydney for their adoption as far as is applicable in their contexts.

It should be read in conjunction with Faithfulness in Service, our national Anglican code of conduct for clergy and church workers, as adopted by the Diocese of Sydney.

## ***Outline***

- Section 1 outlines the Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse (the policy).
- Section 2 outlines the Good Practice Guidelines (guidelines) for responding to domestic abuse.

This is supported by 11 Appendices that provide reference material and templates on Good Practice. It is intended that links to additional resources that cover this subject from other perspectives will be published at a later date.

## ***Where to find the Policy and Guidelines (with Appendices)***

The Policy and Guidelines (with appendices) will be distributed via email:

- to all parish councils and organisations in the Diocese of Sydney, and
- to all licensed clergy and authorised lay ministers licensed in the Diocese of Sydney.

The most up-to-date version of the Policy and Guidelines will be available on the Safe Ministry website of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**). Hard copies of the policy and associated documents can be supplied via the ODSM, on request.

## ***On Terminology***

We have chosen to use the expression **domestic abuse** rather than domestic violence in order to avoid the common misapprehension that only physical violence counts as domestic abuse. We make exceptions when quoting other literature, and when referring to official titles and terminology in common use in other professional circles, e.g., we sometimes refer to "domestic violence services".

We have also chosen to refer to **victims** of domestic abuse, especially in the immediate context of responding to concerns, and the ongoing impact of pain and trauma. But we acknowledge that 'survivor' is also common terminology, preferred by many, since those experiencing domestic abuse show great resilience even just to stay alive in seeking to protect themselves and their loved ones. Therefore, where appropriate to the context, we will sometimes also refer to survivors.

## ***POLICY DATE***

This policy was passed by the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney in October 2018, and was last revised **[TBC: by the Synod in September 2023]**.

## *Section 1*

# *Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse*

# Domestic Abuse Flowchart

At any time in this process you can seek advice from a domestic violence professional. Within 48 hours of a disclosure you should debrief with such a professional.

## A person discloses domestic abuse:

### RESPECT & LISTEN

- Listen with acceptance
- Don't ask for proof
- Assure the victim it's not their fault
- Be honest about your ability to help
- Reassure normal confidentiality will be maintained, but explain its limits

Is there an immediate risk of harm?

Yes

### SAFETY FIRST

- Discuss with the victim, but call the Police **000**
- Seek advice from the NSW Domestic Violence Line **1800 656 463**

No

Are there children involved?

Yes

### CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

- Call the Child Protection Helpline **132 111**
- Remember that witnessing domestic abuse harms children & may be reportable

No

Is the victim or accused in a ministry family?

Yes

### KEEP THE SAFE MINISTRY OFFICE INFORMED

Call the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry 9265 1604

No

Has further help been requested?

Yes

No

### ACTION

- Advise that any intervention needs care and can heighten risk.
- Be guided by what the victim wants
- Outline realistic options: Police, AVDOs, DV services, safety planning, GP, counsellor, refuge; explore other supports like friends.
- Supply appropriate information, phone numbers, websites, Daisy app (be careful of storage).
- Encourage the victim to consult a service, or make a referral on their behalf.
- Don't contact perpetrator without proper advice
- Record what was disclosed and safety concerns, note your actions, and from whom you received advice. Date the record and keep it confidential.

### NO FORMAL ACTION

- Your time was well spent. A victim knows they have been believed, is not in the wrong, and can return to you for further help.
- You can't make a victim of domestic abuse take any action. The most you may be able to do is listen and provide information (note earlier obligations regarding immediate danger or if children are involved).
- You may be able to offer other chances to meet and talk.
- You may be able to suggest referring more generally to a GP, psychologist or counsellor.
- You could supply appropriate information, phone numbers such as 1800 RESPECT, websites, Daisy app (be careful of storage).
- Record what was disclosed and your safety concerns, note your actions and/or advice. Date the record and keep it confidential.



# Domestic Abuse – key telephone numbers and websites for help

AGENCY	CONTACT DETAILS
<p><b>1800 Respect national helpline</b> 24 hour national number for sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling and advice.</p>	<p><b>1800 737 732</b> <b>1800respect.org.au</b></p>
<p><b>Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser</b> Advice to clergy and lay ministers in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney especially for domestic abuse in a church-related setting.</p>	<p><b>0438 826 556</b> (business hours)</p>
<p><b>Daisy App</b> The Daisy App connects people who may experience violence or abuse to support services in their local area. It was developed by 1800RESPECT and is free to use and download. It includes some safety features to help protect the privacy of people using it.</p>	<p><b>Free to download from iPhone App Store &amp; Android Google Play</b></p>
<p><b>Child Protection Helpline</b> Contact this helpline if you think a child or young person is at risk of harm from abuse.</p>	<p><b>132 111</b> <b>reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg</b></p>
<p><b>Lifeline</b> 24 hour telephone crisis line.</p>	<p><b>131 114</b> <b>www.lifeline.org.au/get-help</b></p>
<p><b>NSW Domestic Violence Line</b> 24 hour number for comprehensive information and referrals to nearby support services, for all categories of domestic violence.</p>	<p><b>1800 65 64 63</b> <b>domesticviolence.nsw.gov.au/get-help</b></p>
<p><b>NSW Rape Crisis Centre</b> Counselling service for anyone in NSW – men and women – who has experienced or is at risk of sexual assault.</p>	<p><b>1800 424 017</b> <b>www.nswrapecrisis.com.au</b></p>
<p><b>Law Access NSW</b> Free government telephone service that provides legal information, referral and advice for people who have a legal problem in NSW.</p>	<p><b>1300 888 529</b> <b>lawaccess.nsw.gov.au</b></p>
<p><b>Legal Aid NSW</b> Legal Aid's Domestic Violence Unit provides legal advice, referral and representation, as well as social support, to eligible persons,</p>	<p><b>02 9219 5000</b> <b>legalaid.nsw.gov.au</b></p>
<p><b>No To Violence: Men's Referral Service</b> Telephone counselling, information and referral service for men using violence in families, male victims, and for their friends or relatives.</p>	<p><b>1300 766 491</b> <b>ntv.org.au</b></p>
<p><b>Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (ODSM)</b> Advice about abuse involving clergy or church workers in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.</p>	<p><b>9265 1604</b> <b>safeministry.org.au</b></p>

## **SECTION 1:**

# **Sydney Anglican Policy on Responding to Domestic Abuse**

## **1.1 We acknowledge domestic abuse exists and is wrong**

---

- 1.1.1 We acknowledge, with grief, that domestic abuse is a significant problem, not only within the community, but also inside the Church.
- 1.1.2 All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the victim and are wrong. Perpetrators must stop.
- 1.1.3 **Domestic abuse** involves a pattern of behaviour that seeks to coerce, control, intimidate, hurt or frighten a person in an intimate or family relationship. Domestic abuse may include, but is not limited to emotional, verbal, financial, psychological, spiritual, cultural, physical and sexual abuse. It can also include social isolation, stalking, image-based or technology facilitated abuse, and threats to harm other people including children, property or pets.
- 1.1.4 The primary focus of this Policy is abusive or intimidating behaviour inflicted by an adult against a current or former spouse or partner. However, domestic abuse can occur between siblings, towards older people, and between other people sharing a home.
- 1.1.5 Domestic abuse has many negative impacts on any children in the family – whether or not a child sees or hears the abuse. Such impacts may include physical and emotional harm, ongoing trauma, educational and social disruption, and compromised relationships with both parents. As such it should be seen as a parenting choice by the perpetrator. Responding to any abuse involving children should follow child protection procedures.
- 1.1.6 Sometimes both spouses can be victims of abuse and perpetrate abuse. Typically one spouse is the primary perpetrator of a pattern of abusive behaviour and it is likely that abuse perpetrated by the other spouse is violent resistance in order to protect oneself or others.

## **1.2 We are committed to safe places**

---

The Anglican Diocese of Sydney is committed to promoting and supporting safer environments that:

- 1.2.1 Recognise equality between all people, including husbands and wives.
- 1.2.2 Promote a culture of healthy relationships of mutual responsibility and respect in marriages, families and congregations.
- 1.2.3 Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse.
- 1.2.4 Strive to follow good practice in protecting those experiencing domestic abuse.
- 1.2.5 Refuse to condone any form of abuse.
- 1.2.6 Enable concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

## **1.3 We uphold Faithfulness in Service**

---

We uphold *Faithfulness in Service* as our diocesan code of conduct for clergy and church workers, specifically its affirmations in section 6:

- 1.3.1 Abuse of power is at the heart of many relationship problems in the Church and in the community. In essence, abuse is one person's misuse of power over another. Sometimes abuse will be a one-off event and at other times it will be a pattern of behaviour (6.2).
- 1.3.2 It is important for clergy and church workers to be good citizens and to obey the laws of the community, except where those laws conflict with Christian convictions (6.4).
- 1.3.3 You are not to abuse your spouse, children or other members of your family (6.6).

## 1.4 Domestic abuse requires a serious and realistic response

---

- 1.4.1 Working in partnership with vulnerable adults and children, statutory authorities and specialist agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse.
- 1.4.2 Clergy and lay ministers do not typically have professional expertise in the area of domestic abuse. They need to obtain advice from those with professional expertise when faced with situations of domestic abuse, as advised by *Faithfulness in Service* (4.12).
- 1.4.3 Clergy should ensure the provision of training about domestic abuse, by appropriately qualified professionals or programs, for those in leadership positions, safe ministry roles and other pastoral roles. This should include periodic 'refresher' training.
- 1.4.4 Our response should include attention to primary prevention. This may address a range of factors, such as rigid gender stereotypes, attitudes of male entitlement, general disrespect for women, and other social or cultural factors, which may allow individual misconduct to flourish.
- 1.4.5 Where mistakes in caring for people in difficult situations are made, an apology should be offered and advice sought on how to address any harm caused.

## 1.5 We respect people who come to us for help

---

Our churches are to be places of safety. We shall respond to domestic abuse by:

- 1.5.1 Valuing, respecting and listening to victims of domestic abuse.
- 1.5.2 Valuing, respecting and listening to alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- 1.5.3 Appreciating the need to ensure a distance is kept between the two.
- 1.5.4 Refusing to condone the perpetration or continuation of any form of abuse.

## 1.6 We uphold Scripture and its abhorrence of abuse in our words and public statements

---

In our words and public statements, we ought to:

- 1.6.1 **Clearly teach that domestic abuse is wrong** and that the Bible should never be interpreted to justify or excuse any form of abuse. Rather a relationship between a husband and wife is to be characterised by love, care and kindness.
- 1.6.2 Clearly teach that the Bible does not condone abuse and should not be interpreted to demand a spouse tolerate or submit to domestic abuse.
- 1.6.3 Clearly teach that the Bible encourages victims to seek safety, that separation for such reason is an appropriate step to take, that divorce may properly be a way of protecting victims

in such tragic situations.

- 1.6.4 Oppose false teaching about these matters.
- 1.6.5 Raise awareness of domestic violence agencies, support services, crisis accommodation, resources and expertise.

## **1.7 We ensure safety first**

---

- 1.7.1 **Safety First** – Ensure that those who are experiencing domestic abuse can find safety and informed help as a first priority and can continue to stay safe.
- 1.7.2 **Take it Seriously** – Ensure that any disclosures of abuse are taken seriously and not dismissed; also noting that a perpetrator may deliberately undermine a victim about to disclose abuse, by making their own allegation first.
- 1.7.3 **Get help from outside authorities** – Work with the appropriate statutory authorities during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community.
- 1.7.4 **Keep it confidential** – Respect the need for confidentiality within the bounds of good Safe Ministry practice, noting that reporting requirements exist where there is an immediate danger, where a child is at risk of serious harm or where the matter involves a clergy person or church worker as an alleged offender. Where a report is required, this should first be discussed with the victim wherever possible.
- 1.7.5 **Challenge with Care** – Carefully challenge inappropriate behaviour, but only after receiving professional advice, and only in a way that does not place any individual, especially a victim, at increased risk.

## **1.8 We offer pastoral support to those in our care**

---

- 1.8.1 **Offer informed care** – Ensure that informed and appropriate pastoral care and professional help is offered to any adult, child or young person who has suffered domestic abuse.
- 1.8.2 **Be guided by the victim** – It is never appropriate to pressure any victim of domestic abuse to forgive, submit to, or restore a relationship with an offender. Allow victims to set the pace.
- 1.8.3 **Understand that reconciliation comes with conditions** – Any possibility of reconciliation between victim and offender is dependent principally upon the genuine repentance and reformation of the offender. A victim may choose not to reconcile where they do not feel safe.
- 1.8.4 **Coordinate the care** – Be familiar with appropriate pastoral care relationships for both victims and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse; identify the need for any specialist support and help coordinate its provision; any children involved should be offered separate and independent support.
- 1.8.5 **Recognise cultural differences** – Respond in a culturally sensitive way and understand how cultural norms and values may affect victims or can contribute to abuse being perpetuated.
- 1.8.6 **Ensure equal access to care** – Work to ensure that clergy, clergy spouses, lay ministers and their spouses all have the same access to support and resources as others who experience domestic abuse.

## 1.9 Thinking Theologically – 10 Statements about Domestic Abuse

- 1.9.1 All human beings, both male and female, are created equal in the image of God, and are precious to him. As such their value and dignity rightly commands our respect and protection and should be upheld by all (Genesis 1:27; Psalm 82:3-4; Matthew 22:37-40).
- 1.9.2 Marriage is given by God as a good part of his creation for human wellbeing and should be honoured by all. It is intended as a lifelong union of a man and a woman. Healthy Christian relationships are characterised by servanthood and sacrifice, supremely modeled by Jesus Christ. Within a marriage relationship both husband and wife are to respond to one another by building each other up, which includes mutual love, nurture and respect. Any attempt to justify abusive behaviour by the use of passages in the Bible which speak of headship and submission is intolerable (Mark 10:42-45; Ephesians 5:21-33; Hebrews 13:4).
- 1.9.3 The Bible rejects all abuse, whether physical, verbal, or otherwise expressed from one person towards another and always condemns the misuse of power to control or exploit others. Therefore domestic abuse is evil. Such sin is deceptive in its power and damaging in its effects (Psalm 7; Galatians 5:19-26; 2 Timothy 3:2-3).
- 1.9.4 When domestic abuse in marriage is reported, then separation of the spouses for the sake of the safety of a victim and any children is an appropriate step to be taken and should never be discouraged (Proverbs 27:12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11).
- 1.9.5 Victims of domestic abuse should be encouraged to seek help from the Police, from child protection authorities and other relevant domestic violence services. Church leaders who become aware of situations of domestic abuse should always ensure they meet their mandatory reporting obligations, and obtain professional advice (Romans 13:1-5).
- 1.9.6 When a wife or husband separates for the sake of their safety (or that of their children), such action should not mean the person is deemed to have deserted the marriage or have abandoned their responsibilities as a parent even though they may have physically left the common home. Church leaders should welcome and offer ongoing support to those who have separated for such reasons (Psalm 82:3-4).
- 1.9.7 The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ flows from both justice and love. It calls for repentance and offers forgiveness. When domestic abuse has been indicated as a factor in separation, the perpetrator must be called upon to repent and take full responsibility for their actions. Genuine repentance is demonstrated over time and includes the person gaining an understanding of what led them to behave in an abusive manner, what was wrong with their behaviour, and how it has impacted the victim. (Luke 3:8-14; Romans 12:9; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11). True reformation in such cases takes considerable effort on the part of the perpetrator, may take many years, and, for some, may never be achieved.
- 1.9.8 Forgiveness is often an important part of a victim's healing journey. However any attempts made at reconciliation should only proceed slowly and cautiously, and after consultation with experienced domestic violence services. Care should be taken to manage the risks of further traumatising the victim. The caution of a victim in regard to being reconciled to an offender is appropriate and should not be mistaken for 'unwillingness' to forgive or be reconciled.
- 1.9.9 The grace of the gospel extends to all sinners. Church leaders have an obligation to provide support, pastoral accountability and supervision to any person who remains within their church communities known to have been a perpetrator of domestic abuse. However such support should only be given in a manner that does not condone the abuse nor compromise the safety or pastoral care of victims of domestic abuse.
- 1.9.10 Christians with a genuine desire to be faithful to Scripture hold different views on the question of when divorce is appropriate or remarriage may be possible. However such differences should not impact a Christian's support for a victim of domestic abuse separating from their spouse for the sake of safety. For a discussion of when divorce, and remarriage, might be appropriate actions in the circumstances of domestic abuse please see Appendix 10, which references the 2019 Doctrine Commission report entitled, "The Implications of Domestic

Abuse for Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage 18/18 The nature of marriage” and a “Letter to Members of Synod Regarding Domestic Abuse and Remarriage” from the Archbishop at the time, the Most Reverend Glenn Davies.

## **1.10 What do you need to do in your church?**

---

When a case of domestic abuse is reported in a parish or organisation of the Diocese of Sydney, it is right to act in accordance with the following priorities:

**Safety first** – for the victim(s)

**Support and Empowerment** – for the victim(s)

**Healing** – for the victim(s)

**Accountability** – for the abuser

**Repentance, reformation and healing** – for the abuser

**Define and clarify** the state of the relationship

- 1.10.1 A victim’s physical, emotional and spiritual safety must be our primary and ongoing concern. Other matters above may be considered according to the priorities suggested, although inevitably some stages may overlap or need to be revisited.
- 1.10.2 Further advice is available in our detailed **Good Practice Guidelines**, along with extensive information in the series of attached **Appendices**. All clergy and church workers should familiarise themselves with these guidelines.
- 1.10.3 We have also prepared a **Domestic Abuse Response Flow Chart** with the appropriate processes to follow when you become aware of an incident of domestic abuse. On the page following the flow chart we also list a number of key telephone numbers and websites, along with an app for smart phones and tablets.

## **1.11 Key steps for prevention and care**

---

- 1.11.1 Clergy and church workers should cooperate with statutory authorities such as the Police, child protection services and domestic violence services.
- 1.11.2 Parish Councils should consider adopting and publishing a local domestic abuse policy (see Appendix 7 for the recommended parish version of the above policy).
- 1.11.3 Consider displaying the church’s domestic abuse policy statement in an appropriate place alongside information about how to access advice and support from the Police, domestic violence helplines and diocesan services.
- 1.11.4 Clergy and Parish Councils should consider appointing specified domestic abuse contact person(s) within the local church, especially where the church only has male clergy or church workers.
- 1.11.5 Parish Councils should consider developing their own support towards local services for victims, such as budgeting funds for victims fleeing abuse or towards support of a local women’s refuge (keeping the location secret), or by facilitating a local victims/survivors’ support group.
- 1.11.6 Clergy and church workers should follow diocesan procedures for responding to concerns about domestic abuse (see Flowchart and Good Practice Guidelines – if there is any doubt as to what action to take, refer to the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry or the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser (see ‘Domestic Abuse – key telephone numbers and websites for help’).

- 1.11.7 Clergy should ensure the training, by appropriately qualified professionals or programs, of those in leadership positions, safe ministry roles and other pastoral roles about domestic abuse; such training should address primary prevention as well as pastoral responses.
- 1.11.8 Clergy should ensure domestic abuse is addressed in appropriate contexts such as preaching, Bible studies, prayers and church publications, as well as in marriage preparation, youth groups and ministry training activities.
- 1.11.9 In such teaching, clergy should consider how to prevent convictions regarding biblical teachings, on matters like the marriage covenant, gender relationships, forgiveness and sacrificial love, being distorted or used to justify domestic abuse.

*Section 2:*  
*Addressing Domestic Abuse:*  
*Good Practice Guidelines*



## **SECTION 2:**

# **Addressing Domestic Abuse: Good Practice Guidelines**

## **Preamble**

For the purposes of these Guidelines, **domestic abuse** is defined as a pattern of behaviour that seeks to coerce, control, intimidate, hurt or frighten a person in an intimate or family relationship. Domestic abuse may include, but is not limited to emotional, verbal, financial, psychological, spiritual, cultural, physical and sexual abuse. It can also include social isolation, stalking, image-based or technology facilitated abuse, and threats to harm other people including children, property or pets.

A more extensive definition of the various forms which abuse can take is found in Appendix 1.

Anglicare's Family and Domestic Violence Advisor for Sydney Anglicans comments:

*The primary focus in responding to those experiencing domestic abuse typically involves care, crisis intervention, safety planning for the victim, and empowering a survivor to make the best choices for ongoing personal safety and for any children. In addition, ongoing support and pastoral care is likely to be needed over an extended period to support healing and recovery.*

*At all times our responses should clearly state that victims and survivors are not the cause of the abuse they are suffering, that they are not to blame for a perpetrator's behaviour, that God sees them and knows their suffering, and wants them to find safety and healing.*

*In such cases, teaching and pastoral care should recognise that separation from the spouse may well be the survivor's best choice and will be supported.*

*Ministry staff need to be equipped to provide this ongoing support. They should be aware when teaching on topics such as marriage, forgiveness, suffering or reconciliation, that the needs of domestic abuse survivors and their trauma should be addressed.*

## **2.1 How to respond to victims**

*When you haven't personally experienced abuse, it's easy to listen with an attitude of assessing whether what is being reported is really abuse. 'Would I find that abusive? Doesn't everyone argue sometimes?' However, when a person has repeatedly been victimised and feels powerless, our response always needs to be to offer support, to listen and give those people the respect of being believed.*

- Clinical psychologist and clergy wife

The guidance below aims to assist you in responding to people who disclose domestic abuse.

**2.1.1 Acknowledge your limitations** – Those who respond to news of domestic abuse often feel ill-equipped. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between other types of marital dysfunction and domestic abuse, or it may be that concerns about abuse only emerge gradually. Added complicating factors may include health issues or cultural and social background. Clergy and church workers should acknowledge their professional limitations, and should consult the ODSM, the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser or experienced domestic violence services for advice.

**2.1.2 Safety first** – The safety of victims and any children is paramount. All actions should carefully consider the risk to their, and your, safety. Making telephone calls, possessing information about support services for domestic abuse, the use of texts and emails, and accessing relevant websites all create potential risks for those experiencing abuse.

- 2.1.3 **Be informed** – For information on domestic abuse, its prevalence and effects, and how to recognise both victims and alleged perpetrators, please see Appendix 3. This also briefly notes other particular categories of domestic abuse.

## **2.2 Initial Disclosure**

---

If a victim discloses or otherwise hints at abuse, the following factors are important.

- 2.2.1 **Ask after them** – If a victim hints at abuse, they may want you to ask how they are doing. Your offer of help could be the first step in enabling them to seek help, e.g. 'How are things at home?' and if it becomes appropriate, 'Is anyone hurting you?' or 'Do you ever feel afraid?'.  
2.2.2 **Take time to listen** – Take plenty of time to listen with acceptance to what they say. Proof of abuse is not required in an initial disclosure and the matter does not need to be clarified completely in one sitting. If they sense disbelief, they may be discouraged from speaking again.  
2.2.3 **Choose the place wisely** – If it is at all possible, speak with the victim in a safe, private place where you will not be interrupted, or arrange to talk again, keeping in mind that someone in distress may start talking anywhere. As is the case in other ministry situations, when speaking with a woman, male clergy should consider inviting her to bring a support person, or should conduct the discussion where there are others in the general vicinity.  
2.2.4 **The limits of confidentiality** – Make it clear that complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, depending on the nature of what is disclosed. For example, further disclosure may be needed when someone is being hurt or in serious danger, a serious criminal offence has been committed, or when children are involved (see below).

## **2.3 Immediate action**

---

- 2.3.1 **Dial 000** if you are witnessing a violent incident or if the person needs medical care.  
2.3.2 **Call the Police** if the victim is in immediate danger. Also seek advice from the NSW Domestic Violence Line **1800 656 463**. Be aware that intervention may heighten risk, but it is important to explore how to ensure that people are safe. The Police and staff of the NSW Domestic Violence Line are trained to be careful and sensitive in such situations.  
2.3.3 **Are children involved?** If children are involved and there is a risk of significant harm, a referral to the child protection authorities needs to be made, in addition to calling the Police, and if possible, encourage the victim to make the referral themselves, perhaps supporting them through the process. The victim can be reassured that a referral does not automatically mean that children will be removed from the situation.  
2.3.4 **Is a clergy person or church worker involved?** If the matter involves a clergy person or church worker as an alleged offender, the ODSM will also need to be informed.  
2.3.5 **Is there a threat of self harm?** Any threat to self-harm must be taken seriously as threats of self-harm made by a perpetrator of domestic abuse to their victim are usually part of their controlling and manipulative behaviour. If the victim reports this to you, and you believe there is a risk of serious harm, you should attempt, if possible, to get medical help for the alleged perpetrator or contact the police to request a welfare check for the person.  
2.3.6 **Keep their confidence** – Remember that the confidentiality of the victim must be maintained. Do not contact the alleged perpetrator at this stage without seeking professional advice.

## 2.4 Your response to the disclosure

---

- 2.4.1 **You are brave** – Acknowledge the victim’s strength, and the courage it takes both to have endured abuse and now to talk about it.
- 2.4.2 **Here are some options** – Ensure the victim is aware of the choices available to them and support them in deciding on the next steps, unless there is imminent risk of physical harm or mandatory reporting obligations.
- 2.4.3 **Here is where to find help** – Encourage them to seek professional help from a local domestic violence service who will be able to offer practical safety planning advice, even if they do not want to leave their home. In addition, give information about specialist helplines and websites, as required. (See Flow Chart and the page that follows it.)
- 2.4.4 **Are you in danger?** – Express concern for their safety and immediate welfare. Do they have somewhere to stay?
- 2.4.5 **Are children in danger?** – Ask about the children and their safety and welfare. You may need to persuade them to report any concerns to the child protection authorities. You have no option but to do so if you have received information that a child is at serious risk of harm.
- 2.4.6 **Do you have support?** – Be sensitive to people’s backgrounds and cultures (including Indigeneity). Ask how social and cultural issues may affect them. Be aware that disability, mental illness, or other health conditions can create extra vulnerability. Ask them about what support is safely available to them from friends and family. Be ready to point to external sources of assistance. For example, where a victim has English as a Second Language, generally use trained interpreters, rather than relatives.
- 2.4.7 **Take care of yourself** – Encourage them to focus on their own needs, something they may not have been able to do since the abuse began but which is critical in helping them to change their situation.
- 2.4.8 **It’s not your fault** – Reassure them that whatever the circumstances, abuse is not justified and not their fault.
- 2.4.9 **How can our church best help you?** – Ask them what they want from you and the parish. Offer help which is in response to their needs and preferences and which lets them keep in control, as much as possible. This is important for those experiencing trauma.
- 2.4.10 **Let’s talk again** – There is a lot to take in an initial conversation, so encourage them that they can come back and ask more questions and can take time to consider the offers of help that have been made. Reassure them that the help will be provided with their permission and at their preferred speed.

## 2.5 Record keeping and follow up re. victims

---

Please also see the guidance from *Faithfulness in Service* paragraphs 4.36 and 4.37 (noted in Appendix 6) which address the need to keep notes of individual pastoral activity, and also to be aware of relevant privacy legislation.

- 2.5.1 **What’s the best way to contact you?** – Check if it is all right to contact the victim at home before doing so. Establish their preferred means of contact, and make sure that this is safe.
- 2.5.2 **Keep it confidential** – Keep information confidential and, as a general rule, only share it where appropriate and with informed consent of the victim.
- 2.5.3 **Tell authorities when appropriate and keep a record** – In some circumstances you will be required to share information with statutory authorities, for example, where the victim or

others may be at risk. Always keep a record of your decision and the reasons why you decided to share (or not). If in doubt, contact the ODSM, the Police or the child protection authorities.

- 2.5.4 **Take notes** – It is recommended that you make a brief objective note of dates, facts and context of what you have been told, but keep your opinions separate. This should be kept in strict confidence but could be useful in any future prosecution.
- 2.5.5 **First 48 hours – Within 48 hours of the disclosure you ought to share the incident with someone who is qualified** in the area of domestic abuse, who can support you and help you to think through the issues. This may be a Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser or via the 1800 RESPECT national domestic violence helpline.
- 2.5.6 **Review church safety** – If the alleged perpetrator is in the same church as the victim, you will need to review the safety issues. There may need to be a risk assessment and memorandum of understanding (MOU) put in place. For example, either an ADVO or a pastoral assessment may require that an alleged perpetrator should neither physically attend the same congregation nor digitally belong to the same church Facebook group as the victim. Clergy and church workers should take the initiative in monitoring any MOU and/or ADVO that they are aware of and not leave reports about possible breaches solely for the victim. You are advised to consult with the ODSM.
- 2.5.7 **Safety plan with a professional** – Victim safety planning should be conducted by a professional, ideally from a domestic violence service or the Police. But there may be an occasion when a victim wishes to discuss their safety with you. You should seek advice before entering into detailed safety planning discussions with the victim. However, Appendix 7 gives an example of a safety planning format that normally guides such planning. Careful consideration should be given to where and how such information is provided and kept by the victim, to avoid the alleged perpetrator learning the details of the plan.
- 2.5.8 **When to go to the ODSM** – If the alleged perpetrator is a clergy person or church worker you must report this to the ODSM. There are a range of options available to people who contact the ODSM - not only pursuing a formal complaint about misconduct. Victims experiencing abuse can be afraid to approach the ODSM because they are frightened of having matters taken out of their hands. This is rarely the case, and the ODSM places a high priority on victim safety and choice, and collaborates with victims to work out what is the best way forward for them (and any children).
- 2.5.9 **Extreme discretion needed – Do not give information about the victim’s whereabouts, contact details or personal circumstances to the alleged perpetrator or to others who might pass information on to the alleged perpetrator.** Do not discuss with the parish council or any other members of a congregation or anyone who might inadvertently pass information on to the perpetrator. However, in a larger church setting with a larger pastoral staff team, some discussion and documentation may be required about whom else is brought into the confidentiality circle of the victim and their disclosure. It may be necessary to inform other staff in the safety planning around church practices if the perpetrator is also part of the church but sensitivity and great care needs to be had in this area. Advice from the ODSM will be beneficial in this context.
- 2.5.10 **Offer practical help** – When victims are leaving a controlling perpetrator, they often have to leave with nothing and have access to very limited financial support. Consider how your church can provide practical support for victims. Provide information about the assistance that agencies like Anglicare can supply.

## **2.6 Responding to alleged or known perpetrators**

---

Every church has an important role to play in challenging inappropriate behaviour among its members. This can, however, lead to increased risks for both the victim and the person who

challenges an alleged or known perpetrator. This needs to be done in an extremely careful way that does not place a victim at increased risk.

Anglicare's Family and Domestic Violence Advisor for Sydney Anglicans comments:

*It is crucial to understand that a perpetrator's abusive behaviour is sinful, and that true repentance and behaviour change will likely involve long-term and challenging work. Clergy, church workers and church members ought not be persuaded by a perpetrator that 'everything is OK' because there is an apology or expression of regret. Being alert to perpetrators' attempts to persuade others, particularly those in ministry or positions of influence, to collude with their perspective is a vital part of keeping survivors safe. Even the most experienced Men's Behaviour Change Program workers find managing the issue of collusion to be a challenge.*

Consider the following factors when responding to perpetrators.

- 2.6.1 **The victim comes first** – Ensure that the victim is at the highest priority in terms of safety and wellbeing, and that any action is centred on the victim. Action here includes giving the victim choice in what the next steps are and the timing of those steps unless there is imminent risk of physical harm or mandatory reporting obligations.
- 2.6.2 **Be alert** – Understand the possibility that you are being or may have been groomed or enlisted by a perpetrator towards their point of view.
- 2.6.3 **Strength in numbers** – If meeting an alleged perpetrator, ensure that it is in a public place, and that there are others in the meeting.
- 2.6.4 **Be safe** – Maintain an awareness of the danger that the alleged perpetrator may pose to you, and ensuring that you and others are safe.
- 2.6.5 **First 48 hours – Within 48 hours of the disclosure you ought to share the incident with someone who is qualified** in the area of domestic abuse, who can support you and help you to think through the issues. This may be a Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser or via the 1800 RESPECT national domestic violence helpline.
- 2.6.6 **Get help** – If the alleged perpetrator threatens self-harm while talking with you, then they may require urgent support. Dial 000 if you are witnessing a violent incident or if the person needs urgent medical care. Otherwise you could refer them to their GP, or Mental Health Community Access Team.
- 2.6.7 If the alleged perpetrator is in the same church as the victim, you will need to review the safety issues. There may need to be a risk assessment and 'memorandum of understanding' (MOU) put in place. You are advised to consult the ODSM.
- 2.6.8 **When to contact the ODSM** – If the **alleged perpetrator is a clergy person or church worker** you must report this to the ODSM.
- 2.6.9 **Extreme discretion needed** – Ensure that information concerning the victim is only given to statutory authorities and not to the alleged perpetrator. This includes keeping all contact details and personal circumstances confidential.
- 2.6.10 **Where to get help** – Share information about helplines and accountability programs.

## 2.7 Record keeping and follow up re. perpetrators

---

Please see the previous section on 'record keeping and follow up' in regard to a victim. What follows is additional guidance in relation to responding to alleged or known perpetrators. Any conversation or intervention with a perpetrator of abuse will impact the safety of the victim. It is advisable to always ask the victim first whether or not it is safe to speak with the perpetrator and to plan for and check on

their safety after any interventions. Also recall that it is generally inadvisable for the same person to provide support or pastoral care to both a victim and alleged perpetrator.

- 2.7.1 **You can't promise confidentiality** – While you might respect an individual's right to confidentiality, this cannot be guaranteed. In some circumstances you will be required to share information with statutory authorities, for example, when someone is being hurt, a serious criminal offence has been committed, or a child or adult is at risk.
- 2.7.2 **Keep a record** – Always keep a record of your decision and the reasons why you decided to share or withhold information. If in doubt, contact the ODSM, the Police or the child protection authorities.
- 2.7.3 In following up alleged or known perpetrators:
- Do not collude with, excuse or minimise their behaviour;
  - Do not meet with them alone and in private. Meet in a public place or in the church with several other people around; and
  - Do not try to offer/provide treatment. Only those with professional training should discuss such issues formally with them.
- 2.7.4 In relation to any investigations or legal proceedings for domestic violence:
- Cooperate fully with requests from the police;
  - In the event that the alleged perpetrator requests you to produce documents or give oral evidence in any proceedings, insist that a subpoena is issued;
  - A church leader should exercise extreme caution and seek advice before acting as a character witness or advocating for an alleged perpetrator; and
  - A church leader may arrange for the alleged perpetrator to be provided with pastoral care throughout the investigation or proceedings, but should contact the ODSM for further advice and not provide this care themselves.

## **2.8 Additional guidance for clergy and licensed lay ministers – responding to victims**

---

- 2.8.1 **Help** – Help the victim with any spiritual concerns.
- 2.8.2 **Be patient** – Accept that victims may choose to stay in their situation for a variety of reasons.
- 2.8.3 **Abuse is always wrong** – Emphasise that violence or other domestic abuse is always unacceptable in a marriage, whether Christian or otherwise.
- 2.8.4 **Remember the Lord** – Assure them of God's love and presence and pray with them.
- 2.8.5 **Don't rush to reconcile** – Do not encourage them to forgive the alleged perpetrator or take them back in the absence of persistent evidence of repentant attitudes and behaviour, especially without obtaining professional advice.
- 2.8.6 **Do not pursue couples' counseling/mediation with them and their partner if you are aware that there is abuse in the relationship.**
- 2.8.7 **Seek advice** – Where couples' counseling has been commenced for general marital difficulties and concern about abuse emerges, seek advice about whether it should be discontinued.

## 2.9 Responding spiritually to perpetrators

---

- 2.9.1 **Be clear** – Address any spiritual rationalisations they may offer or questions they may have.
- 2.9.2 **No excuse** – Do not allow them to use theological excuses for their behaviour.
- 2.9.3 **Name the sin** – Name the abuse as *their* sin, not the victim's sin. Tell them that only they can stop it and that they need to seek help. Advise that true repentance and behaviour change will likely involve long-term and challenging work.
- 2.9.4 **Parenting Choice** – For perpetrators who are parents, it is also considered helpful to remind them that domestic abuse is also a choice about parenting. This may provide an additional perspective for understanding the impact of their behaviour.
- 2.9.5 **Do not be easily swayed** – Do not be taken in by the perpetrator's remorse or "conversion" experience. If it is genuine, it will be a tremendous resource as they proceed with accountability. If it is not genuine, it is only another way to groom or manipulate you, so as to maintain control of the process and to avoid accountability.
- 2.9.6 **Pray** – Pray with them.
- 2.9.7 **Remorse** – Be aware that remorse expressed may or may not be genuine. Expressions of regret are often part of the cycle of domestic abuse. Be particularly careful of an alleged perpetrator expressing remorse without any accompanying signs of real and visible repentance.
- 2.9.8 **Repentance must be real, visible and enduring** – A perpetrator may ask for forgiveness from God and seek to live a repentant life. Look for actions of repentance, not just words of repentance. What has the perpetrator done, for how long, with what kinds of accountability, to show evidence of change, such as engaging in a long-term behaviour change program?
- 2.9.9 **Care** – Assure them of your pastoral care in this endeavour.
- 2.9.10 **Do not pursue couples' counselling/mediation with them and their partner if you are aware that there is abuse in the relationship.**

## 2.10 Perpetrator programs

---

The attitudes that underpin domestic abuse often have deep roots and are difficult to change. Some success has been achieved through Men's Behaviour Change programs for alleged or known perpetrators. These programs are conducted over an extended period of time and include one-on-one support as well as a group work program. Participation in such programs should not be linked to suggestions of reconciliation or discussions of postponing separation or divorce.

NSW has minimum standards for accredited Men's Behaviour Change Programs. Information on who is accredited and where programs are conducted can be found at the Men's Behaviour Change Network website: [Men's Behaviour Change Programs \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://men'sbehaviourchange.org.au). Accredited programs in NSW are strongly underpinned by victim support.

Anglicare is accredited to run Men's Behaviour Change Programs in Nowra and Parramatta. Contact the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser for further information.

Participation in a Men's Behaviour Change Program may be mandated by a court but self-referral to community-run programs is possible. Contact the Men's Referral Service (MRS) on 1800 065 973.

Also note that Behaviour Change Programs are more appropriate than the 'anger management' courses sometimes suggested for domestic abusers. A perpetrator may become more dangerous

after completing an anger management course, if he is better able to control and therefore hide his anger, potentially placing his spouse and any children in greater danger.

There is currently not a female equivalent to accredited Men's Behaviour Change Programs. If a female perpetrator was willing to seek assistance, a referral to a specific domestic violence service would be an appropriate option. Be aware that female perpetration often occurs in the context of self-protection, and needs to be thoroughly assessed.

## **2.11 Pastoral issues**

---

- 2.11.1 **Consult the ODSM** – There are complex issues for parishes where both parties continue to attend church. Parishes need to be aware of any legal restrictions (such as an ADVO) around those accused of perpetrating abuse and ensure that these are not undermined. As stated earlier (2.5.6), a risk assessment and MOU may also need to be put in place. You are advised to consult with the ODSM regarding any instance of a victim and a perpetrator (known or alleged) remaining in the same church (including the church's digital environment). If a MOU cannot be agreed, the ODSM can provide further advice about options.
- 2.11.2 **Perpetrators moving church** – If an alleged perpetrator moves to another church, the ODSM should again be consulted regarding any communication between churches. Recall that abusers are often adept at manipulation and at providing a convincing but false narrative to others. Remember that safety for the victim (and others at risk) is paramount.
- 2.11.3 **Is a clergy person involved?** If the victim or alleged perpetrator is a member of the clergy, please talk urgently to the ODSM to review the action required to ensure the victim's safety and the appropriate response (see section 2.12 and section 2.13 below).
- 2.11.4 **Division of care** – Congregational leaders will need to consider how to provide pastoral care to both parties safely, noting that a clergy person or church worker cannot do this for both individuals. Primary attention must always remain on the safety and support of the victim. If they need further advice in relation to providing support they should contact the ODSM or the Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser.
- 2.11.5 **Long-term care for victims** – Churches and carers need to be prepared for the length and complexity of the road ahead. Few are ready for the fact that long term victims of abuse rarely walk out of an abusive situation in a linear fashion. Long-term pastoral support for victims of domestic abuse may also include support to couples when one or both parties have experienced abuse in a previous relationship.
- 2.11.6 **Caring for carers** – Long term abuse also produces secondary victims among the carers, who may not only carry some of the grief and pain of the victim but may also receive abuse themselves. Therefore, those responsible for caring for victims, or for perpetrators, also need emotional and pastoral support, along with others indirectly impacted, for example, friends or family within the parish.
- 2.11.7 **Dissatisfaction with care is possible** – There may be times that either victim or perpetrator, or both, may be dissatisfied with pastoral care provided in such difficult situations, even with significant efforts by congregational leaders to follow good practice guidelines.

## **2.12 Domestic Abuse involving Clergy or Lay Ministers – Victims**

---

- 2.12.1 **Care for victims** – If a clergy person or lay minister, or the spouse of such ministry leaders, discloses abuse, they must be treated like any other victim. Clergy and lay ministers, and their spouses, must have the same access to support and resources as others who are experiencing domestic abuse. In addition, they may speak to the ODSM.



- 2.12.2 **Bishops' protocol** – Our bishops agree that the priority of safety is paramount for victims of abuse within ministry families. Clergy and lay ministers, or their spouses, should expect a bishop to listen with acceptance when disclosing abuse. Working with the ODSM, and in particular, the ODSM Chaplain, these protocols provide guidance for the support of such ministry spouses, especially should they wish to separate. Attention is also expected to be given to matters of housing, schooling, and counselling for the spouse and any children affected.
- 2.12.3 **Heightened vulnerabilities** – In addition to the seriousness of marriage vows, the significance of ordination promises, and/or issues regarding housing security may make clergy and lay ministers or their spouses particularly vulnerable to staying in abusive relationships. In such situations, our diocese should not put fear of scandal above the safety of vulnerable people.
- 2.12.4 **Ministry Support Fund** – Acknowledging that clergy and other ministry couples and families are in a unique situation (often with housing and other family arrangements attached to a parish), a Ministry Spouse Support Fund has been established to assist the spouse and family (if any) re-establish their lives when there has been domestic abuse (or other serious misconduct) by the church worker, which will leave the spouse (and family) in financial hardship. For example, this may include support for school fees, counselling or housing.

## 2.13 Domestic Abuse involving Clergy and Lay Ministers – Alleged perpetrator

---

- 2.13.1 Clergy and lay ministers who are suspected of perpetrating domestic abuse must be treated like any other alleged perpetrator (see section 2.6).
- 2.13.2 Any allegations of domestic abuse committed against a lay minister or member of the clergy should also be referred to the ODSM (see section 2.12).
- 2.13.3 Bishops may consider appointing someone to offer pastoral support to an alleged perpetrator who is a lay minister or member of the clergy. If the alleged perpetrator is a bishop, then the ODSM must be consulted about the provision of such support.
- 2.13.4 Domestic abuse may result in proceedings under our ministry standards and disciplinary ordinances (which can be found under the Ordinances on the SDS website – [www.sds.asn.au](http://www.sds.asn.au)) if:
- it involves sexual abuse of an adult, or
  - conviction for an offence punishable by imprisonment for 12 months or more, or
  - may otherwise call into question the fitness of the person to hold a role or position or to remain in holy orders.

## 2.14 Mediation

---

- 2.14.1 **Get professional help** – Mediation is a specialist activity that in the context of domestic abuse must be undertaken by trained professionals. In order for mediation to be effective any imbalances in power in the relationship need to be addressed.
- 2.14.2 **Safety first** – In the context of family and domestic abuse, mediation (or 'family dispute resolution' as it is known when parenting arrangements are being discussed) can be an empowering process for a victim. However, this can only occur if safety needs are managed and both parties are well-prepared for the mediation process.
- 2.14.3 **Legal advice** – Where children or property matters are concerned, it is also important that both parties have received legal advice. Government-funded Family Relationship Centres (FRCs) are a good referral option for family dispute resolution and have designated processes to ensure the safety of all concerned. Anglicare currently operates FRCs at Nowra and Parramatta.

## **A Case Study: Andrew and Jody**

---

Andrew is separated from his wife, Jody. She had called the Police and Andrew was arrested after an incident of domestic abuse. Charges were pressed and he was found guilty. An Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) has been issued, with Jody and the children listed as protected parties.

Andrew is living apart from Jody. The couple have two children aged 6 and 8, both of whom live with Jody. Andrew wants to be reconciled with his wife and with the church of which they are both long-standing members. He has come to the rector's home in order to discuss with the rector how he can achieve reconciliation with Jody. He is currently not attending church. But Andrew appears to be remorseful and says how sorry he is and how desperate he is to be back in church fellowship and back with his family.

### ***Considerations in responding***

The rector needs to seek advice and support from the ODSM or Anglicare Domestic Violence Adviser in how best to respond. He must also recall that pastoral support cannot normally be provided by one person (such as the rector) both to victim and perpetrator.

The conditions in the ADVO need to be understood to ensure that any contact Andrew has with Jody and the children does not breach the conditions of the ADVO.

The rector needs to be aware and cautious of Andrew's motives. The rector should ensure he is acquainted with the cycle of domestic abuse. In approaching the rector, who knows them both, Andrew might be seen as manipulating or grooming the rector to support him, with the prime motive of reconciliation with his wife. What evidence is there of his repentance, and the steps he has taken to change his behaviour? How are his spiritual needs currently being met?

Consideration of Andrew's desire for reconciliation with Jody must be made in the context of assessing risk to her and risk to their children, and can only be considered if Jody is also willing to consider a conciliation process, and the conditions of the ADVO allow for contact. Extreme caution should be taken by the rector before raising the possibility of conciliation with her, given the perceived implications of his position of authority, and the difficulties in her freedom to choose not to engage in such a process if initiated by the rector.

However, the rector should not get involved in any conciliation between them as this is specialist work and needs to be undertaken by an independent agency equipped for the purpose. The rector can signpost Andrew to such agencies.

The rector can discuss with Andrew the marks of true repentance and forgiveness by God, and arrange for him to receive pastoral care. This would be most appropriately offered by someone not known to either of them.

The rector needs to be aware of boundaries of confidentiality and should not be passing information from Andrew to Jody or vice versa. If he were to do so not only may he lose the trust of one or the other, but he may be putting Jody and her children at further risk.

In conclusion, the rector should be careful to give priority to the safety of the victim and her children who are the vulnerable people in this circumstance.

## Section 3: Appendices

Please note that these appendices do **not** form part of the Policy or Guidelines, but are provided as additional resources.

1. An expansive description of Domestic Abuse
2. Doctrine Commission on The Use and Misuse of Scripture with Regard to Domestic Abuse
3. Visual Representations of Domestic Abuse
4. Domestic Abuse Facts
  - 1) Who experiences domestic abuse?
  - 2) Domestic Abuse Statistics for Australia
  - 3) Challenging misconceptions about domestic abuse
  - 4) Recognising domestic abuse in adult victims
  - 5) Recognising domestic abuse in children
  - 6) Who are the perpetrators of domestic abuse?
  - 7) Social factors that contribute to domestic abuse
  - 8) Recognising perpetrators of domestic abuse
  - 9) How a perpetrator of abuse might invite you to collude with them
  - 10) Particular Types of Domestic abuse
  - 11) Trauma-Informed Care
5. Legal Framework
6. Domestic Abuse: Policy Guidance from *Faithfulness in Service*
7. Suggested Parish Policy on Domestic Abuse
8. Draft Safety and Exit plan
9. Marriage Preparation: Recommended good practice
10. Doctrine Commission on Divorce and Remarriage
11. "Walking Through It: A Family Violence Survivor's Reflection"

**An expansive description of Domestic Abuse**

It is critical to understand that domestic abuse includes far more than just physical violence. The National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and Children (NCRVWC) found that –

... a central element of domestic violence is that of an ongoing pattern of behaviour aimed at controlling one's partner through fear (for example, by using violent or threatening behaviour)

... the violent behaviour is part of a range of tactics used by the perpetrator to exercise power and control ... and can be both criminal and non-criminal in nature.<sup>1</sup>

Following wide consultation<sup>2</sup>, this Policy has adopted the following definition:

***Domestic abuse** involves a pattern of behaviour that seeks to coerce, control, intimidate, hurt or frighten a person in an intimate or family relationship. Domestic abuse may include, but is not limited to emotional, verbal, financial, psychological, spiritual, cultural, physical and sexual abuse. It can also include social isolation, stalking, image-based or technology facilitated abuse, and threats to harm other people including children, property or pets.*

Domestic violence includes:

- **Emotional Abuse** – blaming the victim for all problems in the relationship, undermining the victim's self-esteem and self-worth through comparisons with others, withdrawing interest and engagement and emotional blackmail;
- **Verbal Abuse** – and humiliation in private and public by swearing, yelling, insults or name-calling, focusing on intelligence, sexuality, body image or the victim's capacity as a parent or spouse;
- **Financial Abuse** – controlling a victim's access to money or bank accounts, forcing the victim to account for how they spend money, withholding financial information, providing an inadequate 'allowance', preventing the victim seeking or holding employment, taking the victim's wages or money without consent;
- **Psychological Abuse** – making threats regarding custody of children, asserting the justice system will not believe or support the victim, destroying property, abusing pets and driving dangerously;
- **Spiritual Abuse** – using religious beliefs to scare a victim, stopping a victim from practising their religion or forcing them to take part in religious practices, misusing religious beliefs to force victims into subordinate roles and misusing religious or spiritual traditions to justify physical violence or other abuse;
- **Cultural Abuse** – forcing someone to act against their cultural beliefs and practices, or using cultural norms and practices against them. E.g., not allowing someone to return to Country, isolating from or humiliating someone in their cultural community, dowry abuse, female genital mutilation or forced marriage based on cultural practices, threats to have someone deported from Australia if they leave a marriage;
- **Physical Abuse** – direct assaults on the body, including hitting, kicking, pushing, shaking or choking, the use of weapons (including objects), locking the victim out of the house, sleep and food deprivation, also the assault of children;

<sup>1</sup> National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children, *The National Council's plan for Australia to reduce violence against women and their children, 2009–2012, Background paper to Time for Action*, Attachment A, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Canberra, March 2009, p13, cited in "Domestic violence in Australia – an overview of the issues" By Liesl Mitchell, Social Policy Section, Parliamentary Library Research Publications, 22 November 2011, Parliament of Australia.

<sup>2</sup> Sources consulted: Australian Government: Services Australia, "What is family and domestic violence?" (<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/what-family-and-domestic-violence?>); NSW Government: NSW Police, "What is Domestic Violence?" ([https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime/domestic\\_and\\_family\\_violence/what\\_is\\_domestic\\_violence](https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime/domestic_and_family_violence/what_is_domestic_violence)); NSW Government: Communities and Justice, "What is domestic and family violence?" (<https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/children-and-families/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/about-domestic-and-family-violence/what-is-domestic-and-family-violence.html>); all accessed 20 March 2023. Also National Domestic and Family Violence Bench Book, "Cultural and spiritual abuse" (<https://dfvbenchbook.aija.org.au/understanding-domestic-and-family-violence/cultural-and-spiritual-abuse/>); accessed 25 April 2023.

- **Sexual Abuse** – any form of pressured/unwanted sex or sexual degradation, causing pain during sex, coercive sex without protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease, making the victim perform sexual acts unwillingly and criticising or using degrading insults;
- **Social Isolation** – systematic isolation from family and friends, instigating and controlling relocations to a place where the victim has no social circle or employment opportunities and preventing the victim from going out to meet people;
- **Stalking** – behaviour that harasses or intimidates by repeated phone calls or messages, unwanted or obsessive attention, following or monitoring the victim;
- **Image-based or technology facilitated abuse** – publishing intimate photos without consent, sharing or threatening to share photos or messages with the intention of putting the victim at risk of stigma, discrimination or harm, monitoring what the victim does online, by checking their computer and phone use, or by using spyware to track the person.

Coercive Control is another phrase that is now commonly used. Coercive control can be thought of as abusive conduct used to maintain control over the victim's behaviour, or to have them suffer emotional or physical torment and live in fear. It may make the victim do or believe things they wouldn't normally or adversely impact the victim's capacity to engage in some or all of the person's ordinary day-to-day activities. For example, they may be caused to doubt themselves, or be stopped from seeing people, leaving the house or doing other activities important to them.

**Appendix 2****Doctrine Commission on The Use and Misuse of Scripture with Regard to Domestic Abuse**



Some people use Bible verses as an excuse to abuse their wife, husband, or children. This is always wrong. Others think that the Bible tells them to put up with abuse. This is also wrong. Here are some important Bible verses that are sometimes used in this way. For each verse, there are wrong meanings and correct meanings. There are many more things to say about these verses, but these are the most important points for domestic abuse. These points do not explain the verses fully. To understand them more fully, we must do three things together:

- a) Read the whole chapter or section in which the verse or verses are found.
- b) Understand how the verse or verses fits into the chapter or section.
- c) Think about how the Bible's teaching applies to your situation.

**Please note:** If you think you might be a victim of domestic abuse, we suggest you read this document with a supportive friend or counsellor.

**Key Words and their Meanings*****Helper*****Bible verses: Genesis 2:18, 21**





<sup>18</sup> The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him." ... <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, the LORD God took out one of the man's ribs. He closed up the opening that was in his side.

<b>Wrong meaning: The woman is below the man.</b>	
	A "helper" is a servant. God made the woman to be the servant of the man. The woman is less important than the man.
<b>Correct meaning: The woman and the man are equal.</b>	
	The word "helper" does not mean below or less. This word is mostly used in the Bible to describe God. God is Israel's "helper" when he comes to rescue them (e.g. Deuteronomy 33:26; Psalm 22:19; Psalm 121:1-2). The words "just right for him" mean that the woman and the man are a perfect match. Each one needs the other.  In Genesis 2:21 God made the woman out of the man's rib. She was not taken from his head, to be over him, or from his foot, to be under him. She came from his side to be his equal partner.

**Submit**


**Bible verses: Ephesians 5:22-23**


<sup>22</sup>Wives, submit to your own husbands as you submit to the Lord. <sup>23</sup>The husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the church. The church is Christ's body. He is its Saviour.

<b>Wrong meaning (verse 22): The wife must always submit to her husband no matter what.</b>	
	A wife must not ask questions or think for herself. She must always do what her husband tells her to do, even if he asks her to sin or submit to abuse. If she does not submit to him, then he is allowed to punish her.
<b>Correct meaning (verse 22): A wife chooses to submit. Her husband must not force, pressure or punish her.</b>	
	The Bible teaches that a wife should freely choose to submit to her husband. It is a gift she gives. A husband must never force or pressure his wife to submit. He must never punish her if she does not submit. If a wife cannot say no, then her submission cannot be free. Sometimes a wife should not submit. She must be free to say no to sin. She should not submit to abuse.
<b>Wrong meaning (verse 23): The husband may do anything he likes.</b>	
	The husband has all the power, because he is the head. He can do what he wants. He can make all the decisions. He can tell his wife what to do, but she can never tell him what to do. For example, he may demand sex whenever he wants, and she has no right to refuse.
<b>Correct meaning (verse 23): The husband's responsibility is to serve his wife.</b>	
	"Christ is the head of the Church." This means that he loved us and sacrificed himself for us. A husband must be the head of his wife in the same way. He must do all he can to love and protect her. He must encourage and care for his wife like his own body (Ephesians 5:28-29). Loving and caring means putting his wife's needs first.

**Bible verses: 1 Peter 3:1, 5-6**



<sup>1</sup>Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands in the same way. Suppose some of them don't believe God's word. Then let them be won to Christ without words by seeing how their wives behave... <sup>5</sup>This is how the holy women of the past used to make themselves beautiful. They put their hope in God. And they submitted themselves to their own husbands. <sup>6</sup>Sarah was like that. She obeyed Abraham. She called him her master. Do you want to be like her? Then do what is right. And don't give in to fear.

<b>Wrong meaning: Endure abuse to show your husband what Jesus is like.</b>	
	In the same way that Christ endured suffering (1 Peter 2:21-23), and slaves are to endure mistreatment from unjust masters (2:20), a wife should also endure abuse at the hands of her husband. A wife should be like Jesus. If her husband beats her, she should suffer the beating quietly. She should not be afraid. This will show her husband what Jesus is like.

<b>Correct meaning: Respect your husband, even if he is hostile to your faith.</b>	
	<p>1 Peter 3 continues the argument of 1 Peter 2. "In the same way" (3:1) means that Peter is continuing his discussion of respect. Out of respect, slaves should submit to their masters (2:18). Out of respect, wives should submit to their husbands (3:1). Out of respect, husbands should be considerate of their wives (3:7).</p> <p>However, it is important to understand the difference between the examples given in 1 Peter 2 and 1 Peter 3. Peter told slaves to suffer beatings patiently, like Jesus did. But he does not tell wives to suffer beatings. Wives are not slaves. Even the laws of the Romans did not permit wives to be beaten. The hardship the wife must endure in 1 Peter 3 is the hardship of being married to an unbelieving husband, not to an abusive husband. The passage does not teach wives to submit to domestic abuse.</p>

**Sex****Bible verses: 1 Corinthians 7:3-5**

<sup>3</sup> A husband should satisfy his wife's sexual needs. And a wife should satisfy her husband's sexual needs. <sup>4</sup> The wife's body does not belong only to her. It also belongs to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong only to him. It also belongs to his wife. <sup>5</sup> You shouldn't stop giving yourselves to each other except when you both agree to do so. And that should be only to give yourselves time to pray for a while. Then you should come together again. In that way, Satan will not tempt you when you can't control yourselves.



<b>Wrong meaning: You must always have sex when your spouse wants to.</b>	
	It is always wrong to say no to your spouse. If you say no to your spouse, they will fall into sexual temptation. This will be your fault.
<b>Correct meaning: Sex is a gift which a husband and a wife freely give to each other.</b>	
	<p>Sex is a gift your spouse gives to you. You do not take it from them. It is their free gift. It is a normal part of married life. It helps to avoid temptation. When you are free to give sex, then you should give sex, unless you both agree to stop for some time, so you can pray (verse 5).</p> <p>But your spouse is not always free to give and receive sex. They may be sick, or in pain, or tired, or sad, or bearing a child, or having sexual problems. The bodies of husbands and wives belong to each other (verse 4). This means you must care for each other's bodies. You should wait until they are ready to give and receive sex. You must not pressure them. A gift that you demand is not a true gift, and a gift you force upon someone is not a true gift. You must be patient and kind with each other.</p>



**Forgive**

**Bible verse: Matthew 6:15**



But if you do not forgive the sins of other people, your Father will not forgive your sins.

<b>Wrong meaning: Forget the sin and start again.</b>	
	If you forgive someone, then you must forget what they did. Everything can be the same as it was before. The other person does not need to change their behaviour.
<b>Correct meaning: Forgive others as God has forgiven you.</b>	
	This passage does not say everything that the Bible teaches about forgiveness. The basic point of Matthew 6:15 is that we should forgive as we have been forgiven. If we genuinely repent and turn from our sin, then God forgives us. In the same way, when an abuser genuinely repents and tries to change, we also should forgive them. This may be a difficult and long process. Sometimes we will come back together with a person we have forgiven. Sometimes this will not be possible. Separation may be necessary and may even become permanent.  Forgiveness does not mean that we take sin lightly. If an abuser continues to abuse, they must be stopped. You do not need to endure abuse in the name of forgiveness.

**Trust**

**Bible verse: Deuteronomy 19:15**

Every matter must be proved by the words of two or three witnesses.

<b>Wrong meaning: Doubt the victim’s testimony.</b>	
	When someone says, “I was abused!”, you should not believe them. You should only believe them if other people saw the abuse and agree to be witnesses.
<b>Correct meaning: Trust the victim’s testimony.</b>	
	Moses gave this law for crimes that other people witnessed. When nobody saw a crime, Moses did not expect witnesses. Deuteronomy 22:25-27 shows that we may believe the word of an abused person when there are no witnesses.

**Conclusion**

The Bible is the good Word of a good God. Sadly, we can twist and misuse this good gift. So it is very important that the Bible is rightly understood and rightly applied to our lives. When it is wrongly understood and wrongly applied, it can damage people, destroy relationships and dishonour God. Rightly understood, the Bible condemns all forms of domestic abuse.

*Mark D. Thompson*

On behalf of the Diocesan Doctrine Commission

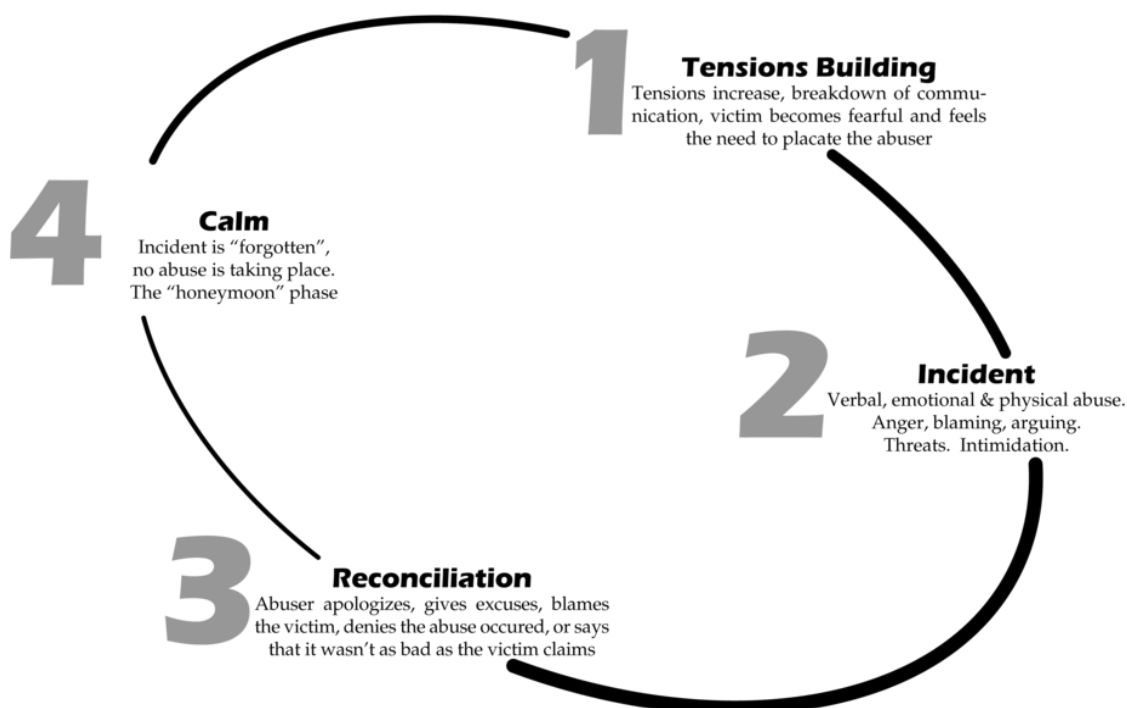
6 September 2018

### Visual Representations of Domestic Abuse

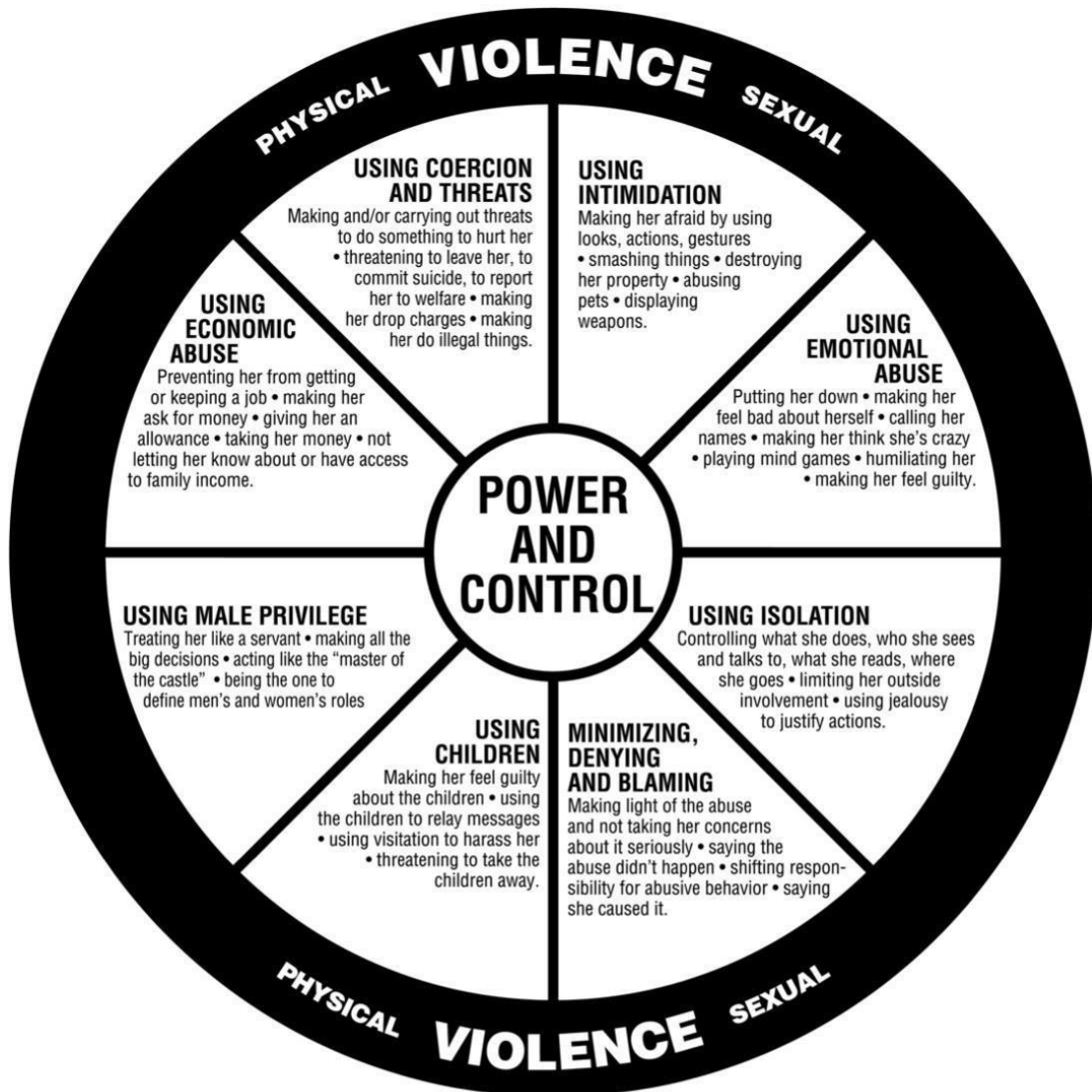
Many victims have found a visual representation of the signs or symptoms and patterns of domestic abuse helpful in identifying and understanding their own situation.

The 'Cycle of Abuse', first developed by Dr Lenore Walker (1979) in the USA, is one such resource (diagram public domain and courtesy of user 'Avanduyn' via Wikipedia)

# Cycle of Abuse



The Duluth 'Power and Control' Wheel is another resource. The Domestic Abuse Intervention Program, which developed the diagram, invites others to use it in efforts to inform and educate (theduluthmodel.org).



## **Domestic Abuse Facts**

### **1. Who experiences domestic abuse?**

Domestic abuse can occur to anyone regardless of age, race, culture, disability, sexuality, class, geography or income.

Most domestic abuse is perpetrated by men against women, but the perpetrator of domestic abuse can be of either sex, and the victim can be of either sex.

Victims can be male, although the majority are female. Abuse can also occur in same sex relationships, between siblings or by adult children against a parent.

Sometimes both spouses can be simultaneously perpetrators and victims of abuse, although the pattern of abuse is not usually symmetrical.

Many victims will only disclose that a partner was violent and abusive after leaving a relationship. Things to keep in mind:

- Women are particularly vulnerable to abuse when pregnant or seeking to leave a relationship;
- Older people and disabled people can be vulnerable to domestic abuse;
- Children experience domestic abuse in many ways, including through directly intervening to protect one of their parents, being forced to join the adult perpetrator, and hearing or witnessing violent attacks or verbal abuse;
- Coercive and controlling behaviour in a domestic abuse situation can be exerted over the whole family so any children suffer as well as the victim;
- Many women come to Australia to work and improve their lives, and many can then become trapped in relationships characterised by abuse with no avenue to seek safety and support; and
- Domestic abuse happens within the Church. Church leaders, members of the clergy, and spouses of clergy have been found to be victims of domestic abuse.

### **2. Domestic Abuse Statistics for Australia**

Note: Statistics do not tell the whole story, as they do not identify patterns of control and abuse in relationships. They do not capture level of fear, or the severity of injury or impact, for the victim.

#### *Prevalence of Domestic Violence in Australia*

- 1 in 6 women (17%) and 1 in 18 men (5.5%) had experienced threatened or actual physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner, since the age of 15.<sup>1 2</sup>
- 23% of women and 14% of men have experienced emotional abuse by a partner since the age of 15.<sup>1</sup>
- 16% of women and almost 8% of men have experienced economic abuse by a partner since the age of 15.<sup>1</sup>
- An estimated 13% of people aged 18 and over in Australia have been witnesses to domestic violence towards a parent by a partner before the age of 15.<sup>1</sup> Indigenous women were 33 times more likely than the wider female population to be hospitalized due to family and domestic violence. Such

---

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2021-22) *Personal Safety Australia*, accessed 21 March 2023 at <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/personal-safety-australia/2021-22> The survey collected information about the nature and extent of violence experienced by men and women since the age of 15, including their experience of violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

<sup>2</sup> This means that approximately 1.7 million women have experienced at least one incident of actual or threatened physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner (since the age of 15). Note that this excludes broader forms of domestic abuse, such as emotional or spiritual abuse.

hospitalisation rates increased with remoteness and were highest for those in the most disadvantaged socioeconomic areas.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Reported incidents of Domestic Violence in NSW<sup>4</sup>*

- Utilising data recorded by the NSW Police Force, the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research reported that, in the five years to December 2021 –
  - 71% of IPV murder victims were female.
  - 78% of ‘persons of interest’ (i.e. alleged perpetrators) in IPV murders were male.<sup>5</sup>
- The NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team reported that 89% of men killed by a female intimate partner had been the primary domestic violence abuser in the relationship.<sup>6</sup>
- In 2022, NSW Police recorded over 33,000 incidents of domestic violence related assaults. In addition there were over 20,000 domestic violence related incidents of intimidation, stalking or harassment, and over 10,000 domestic violence related incidents of malicious damage to property. 69% of adult victims of domestic violence assault were female. Intimate partner violence accounts for 55% of all domestic violence assaults, 70% of alleged domestic violence offenders were male.<sup>7</sup>

### **3. Challenging misconceptions about domestic abuse**

Many people will have misconceptions and attitudes about domestic abuse which are incorrect. Here are some common myths about what domestic abuse is and who it affects:

#### *Myth 1: It happens to certain types of people*

It can be thought that domestic abuse happens to a certain type of person – based on socio-economic status, religious or cultural backgrounds, or a perception of strength and resilience. This is not the case. Domestic abuse and violence can happen to anyone at any time.

#### *Myth 2: It happens because of...*

It is sometimes claimed that domestic abuse happens primarily because of a person’s religion, or because of alcohol or drug abuse, unemployment, abuse as a child, mental or physical ill health, or other environmental factors.

Although these may be contributory factors, abuse happens because an abusive person chooses to behave in a way that enables them to assert power and control over another person – excuses and reasons are given to justify abusive behaviour.

#### *Myth 3: A victim can cause a perpetrator to become abusive*

Often a perpetrator will tell a victim that they caused them to do it. But a victim is never to blame if a perpetrator chooses to behave in an abusive and controlling way.

#### *Myth 4: A victim can fully understand what is happening to them*

When someone is in a relationship in which they are subject to abuse they will often feel very confused about what is happening, and they are sometimes not sure that what they are experiencing is abuse.

---

<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, “Family, domestic and sexual violence data in Australia”, 9 November 2022, accessed 21 March 2023 at <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/domestic-violence/family-domestic-sexual-violence-data/contents/what-services-or-supports-do-those-who-have-experienced-family-domestic-and-sexual-violence-use/hospitalisations-for-family-and-domestic-violence>.

<sup>4</sup> Much domestic violence goes unreported – usually because the victim does not consider an incident serious, is too ashamed, fears the offender, or thinks police cannot or will not act.

<sup>5</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2022), *Domestic Violence-related murder in NSW*, infographic accessed 21 March 2023 via [https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar\\_pages/Domestic-Violence.aspx](https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar_pages/Domestic-Violence.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team (2017), *NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015-2017*, pp. xi-xii.

<sup>7</sup> NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2022), *Domestic & Family Violence in NSW, 2018-2022*, infographic accessed 21 March 2023 via [https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar\\_pages/Domestic-Violence.aspx](https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Pages/bocsar_pages/Domestic-Violence.aspx)

*Myth 5: A victim can choose to leave and if they don't, they are choosing to stay*

People ask why victims stay in a situation where they are suffering abuse, and assume that it is easy to leave, to escape the situation and to start a new life. This is not the case, either on a practical or an emotional level. A perpetrator of abuse will work to ensure that the victim feels that they cannot cope on their own.

Leaving a physically violent relationship is often the most dangerous time for women and children. It may also be financially impossible to leave the situation, particularly when there are children. Victims often do not have a choice in leaving and may feel, or be, threatened that if they leave they will be in danger. It may feel safer to stay than to leave.

*Myth 6: Victims should stand up for themselves and their children*

It is important to recognise such strength and resilience displayed by victims. Indeed, victims are usually doing many things to protect and look after themselves and their children, e.g. getting their children fed, and ensuring they get to school.

*Myth 7: Domestic abuse is all about anger*

Domestic abuse is not all about being angry or losing control. Although not always a calculated action, a central element is the choice to act in a controlling way.

*Myth 8: Domestic abuse doesn't happen in our church*

Domestic abuse happens in every community, including within the Church. The National Anglican Family Violence Project Research reported that sad 'headline' finding that Anglican church attenders (defined as attending at least several times a year) appear to be more likely than members of the general public to have experienced domestic abuse over a lifetime, and as likely within the last year. So it is extremely likely that there will be those in your church who have been affected by domestic abuse.<sup>8</sup>

#### **4. Recognising domestic abuse in adult victims**

It is very difficult to create a definitive list of signs that domestic abuse is happening because abuse can occur on many levels and both victims and alleged or known perpetrators can behave and respond in a range of different ways. The following list of signs of behaviour for victims is not exhaustive, and should not be used as a definitive list but should be used as guidance:

- Has unexplained bruises or injuries;
- Shows signs of feeling suicidal;
- Becomes unusually quiet or withdrawn;
- Has panic attacks;
- Has frequent absences from work or other commitments;
- Wears clothes that conceal even on warm days;
- Stops talking about her/his partner;
- Is anxious about being out or rushes away;
- May never be seen alone, and is always accompanied by their partner;
- May become more isolated, possibly moving away from home, withdrawing from friends and family;
- Goes along with everything their partner says and does;
- Checks in often with their partner to report where they are and what they're doing;
- Receives frequent, harassing phone calls from their partner; and/or
- May have unexplained injuries, and may give other reasons for the injuries which refer to them being accidental.

---

<sup>8</sup> Powell, R. & Pepper, M. (2021), *National Anglican Family Violence Research Report: for the Anglican Church of Australia*, NCLS Research Report, accessed 21 March 2023 via <https://anglican.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/1.-NAFVP-Research-Report.pdf>; the report notes the limitation that this finding arises from a carefully weighted non-probability sample, so caution must be exercised in generalising. In addition, the research did not address the question of the *prevalence of perpetrators* within Anglican churches.

## Survivor View

*The abuse went on for six years before I realised that what I was experiencing wasn't just a bad marriage. Everyone says marriage is difficult so at first I thought it was that – our adjustment to married life.*

*There was pressure to make marriage work and to sacrifice yourself. After all the church says 'till death us do part'. I bent over backwards to make it work.*

*From the outside most people thought we were the perfect happy couple. But I was walking on eggshells in my own home, never knowing what mood he would be in when he came home.*

*It was such a lonely time. I didn't think anyone would believe me if I told them what it was really like at home. I was desperate for some hope.*

## 5. Recognising domestic abuse in children

Living in a home where there's domestic abuse is harmful. It can have a serious impact on a child's behaviour and wellbeing. Parents or carers may underestimate the effects of the abuse on their children because they don't see what's happening.

Indeed, a child who witnesses or overhears domestic abuse is generally considered to be the victim of indirect child abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour. If children are involved this way, a referral to the child protection authorities will need to be considered.

Domestic abuse can also be a sign that children are suffering another type of abuse or neglect. The effects can last into adulthood. However, once they're in a safer and more stable environment, most children are able to move on from the effects of witnessing domestic abuse.

### Younger children who experience and witness domestic abuse may:

- Become aggressive;
- Display anti-social behaviour;
- Become anxious;
- Complain of tummy aches and start to wet the bed;
- They may find it difficult to sleep, have temper tantrums and start to behave as if they are much younger than they are;
- They may also find it difficult to separate from their abused parent when they start nursery or school; and/or
- Children may be clingy, have behavioural difficulties, may be tired and lethargic, and struggle in social settings and at school.

### Older children/young people who experience and witness domestic abuse react differently:

- Boys seem to express their distress much more outwardly, for example by becoming aggressive and disobedient. Sometimes, they start to use violence to try and solve problems, and may copy the behaviour they see within the family;
- Older boys may play truant and start to use alcohol or drugs (both of which are a common way of trying to block out disturbing experiences and memories);
- Girls are more likely to keep their distress inside. They may become withdrawn from other people, and become anxious or depressed;
- Girls may think badly of themselves and complain of vague physical symptoms. They are more likely to have an eating disorder, or to harm themselves by taking overdoses or cutting themselves;
- Girls are also more likely to choose an abusive partner themselves; and/or
- Suffer from depression or anxiety.

Children of any age can develop symptoms of what is called 'Post-traumatic Stress Disorder'. They may get nightmares, flashbacks, become very jumpy, and have headaches and physical pains. Children dealing with domestic violence and abuse often do badly at school. Their frightening experiences at home make it

difficult to concentrate in school, and if they are worried about their abused parent, they may refuse to go to school.

### **Long-term impact on children and young people**

As adults, children who have experienced domestic violence and abuse are at greater risk of becoming involved in a violent and abusive relationship themselves. Children from violent and abusive families may grow up feeling anxious and depressed, and find it difficult to form trusting relationships.

However, children don't always repeat the same patterns when they grow up. Early intervention, support, and safety will assist children to recover so they may flourish as adults.

## **6. Who are the perpetrators of domestic abuse?**

Most known perpetrators of domestic abuse are men, but women are also known to engage in such behaviour.

- Anyone across the social spectrum can perpetrate domestic abuse – a perpetrator's outward appearance may be outgoing and friendly, and/or very confident, whilst the victim may be withdrawn and considered by many as unfriendly. However a disclosure of domestic abuse by any individual should always be taken seriously.
- There is no excuse for abuse. People who abuse their partners make a choice to do so. Often alcohol, drugs, childhood problems (such as a violent/abusive childhood), and mental health and psychological disorders are cited as causes of domestic abuse. Whatever the contributors in any given case, domestic abuse always involves a misuse of power by one person over another. Individuals who perpetrate domestic abuse generally do so to get what they want and to gain control.
- Domestic abuse happens within the Church; church leaders, members of the clergy, spouses of clergy, and prominent lay members have all been found to be perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- Seeing change in perpetrators is a long-term process. Perpetrator programs are long-term groups or one to one interventions which challenge the underlying attitudes and beliefs that drive domestic abuse. For more information on where accredited programs are conducted can be found at the Men's Behaviour Change Network website: [Men's Behaviour Change Programs \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://Men's Behaviour Change Programs (nsw.gov.au))

## **7. Social factors that contribute to domestic abuse**

Domestic abuse is complex and is not necessarily explained by any single factor or theory. However extensive research indicates that there are common 'social drivers' of domestic abuse – factors that allow it to flourish in society – including gender inequality and other forms of oppression. Related factors are condoning of men's violence against women, rigid gender stereotyping, cultures of masculinity that emphasise dominance, aggression and control, and men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public or private life.

## **8. Recognising perpetrators of domestic abuse**

Perpetrators are very good at hiding their behaviour. The following list of signs of perpetrator behaviour is not exhaustive, and should not be used as a definitive list but should be used as guidance:

- Presents confidently;
- Focuses on themselves and has no empathy with partner;
- Assertively claims victim status;
- Finds no fault in themselves;
- Makes unfounded accusations;
- Puts partner down and portrays partner often as unreasonable or unstable;
- Does not consider the children's experiences;
- Makes disparaging remarks about their partner in public – "overly emotional, can't cope, mentally ill";
- Uses their wedding vows as leverage to keep their partner tied to them – "you promised...";
- Expresses suspicion about legitimate activities of partner;
- Restricts access to partner's family and friends;
- Controls financial access and activity;



- Recruit others to back them up against their partner;
- Uses inappropriate humour, especially about compliance;
- Tries to engender pity in order to manipulate and recruit colluders;
- Shows changeable behaviour in order to hold onto control;
- Restricts partner's attendance at church or Bible study groups; and
- Uses Scripture to justify behaviour, demands or requests.

### 9. How a perpetrator of abuse might invite you to collude with them

Those who use abuse in their family relationships tend to deny their behaviour, minimise its impacts and blame their victims for causing them to behave in such ways. Additionally, they may seek to influence those around them, especially those with positional power or spiritual authority to support their perspective, and to see the victim as the problem. This may include emphasising the spouse's weaknesses, or portraying themselves as victims or as long-suffering of their partners' behaviour, or undermining the other's reputation within the church community, so that the victim's disclosures will not be believed. (This is a form of 'gaslighting' before a victim makes a disclosure.)

Sometimes perpetrators hold positions of power or influence in the church, present well in public, or have a vital ministry, adding further challenge for those who know them to conceive the real possibility that their private behaviour may be abusive and should be taken seriously.

### 10. Particular Types of Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can occur in many contexts. For example, there is abuse within Indigenous communities, and in same-sex relationships; there is also child or adolescent to parent abuse, and abuse of elders.

Some perpetrators will use **religious or cultural beliefs** as a way of maintaining patriarchal power and control, and to justify their abusive behaviour. Often the violence or abuse is perpetrated by members of the extended family, with the collusion of others in the community. Awareness of the wide variety of culturally specific forms of abuse will also help in identifying abuse and responding appropriately.

For example, these can include so-called 'honour' crimes and killings, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, all of which constitute criminal behaviour, Culture is never an excuse for abuse.

Tragically, **Indigenous communities** are over-represented in domestic abuse statistics. When responding to domestic abuse within this community, we must always speak first of the importance of the safety of the victim, yet understand it is not always possible or advisable to treat domestic abuse identically to other groups. Due to historical abuses, including the removal of children from their families, as well as intergenerational trauma, Indigenous communities are often reluctant to engage with authorities. Some in such communities may sometimes consider removal of children as an outcome worse than adults enduring such violence.

**Men** are in the minority, in terms of sex, as victims of domestic abuse. However it is important for male victims to know they are not alone. Such abuse can involve dominating behaviour, social isolation, emotional and psychological abuse, as well as physical assault. Perpetrators can be a wife, girlfriend or partner but can also be children, parents, siblings and carers of all genders. Men often don't report abuse by women because they feel embarrassed or think they won't be believed if they report it. They may also be in denial or lack support, or their religious or cultural beliefs may cause them to hesitate. However men can call MensLine Australia (1300 78 99 78), or 1800RESPECT, where there are trained counsellors available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The need to protect victims remains the main imperative, irrespective of the cultural context in which domestic abuse occurs.

### 11. Trauma-Informed Care

Trauma-informed care recognises and responds to the particular needs of those who have been subjected to abuse. Abuse, by nature, removes a victim's actual and perceived safety and agency, and betrays their trust. A trauma informed approach to caring for a victim therefore places high priority on the values of safety, trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. For those seeking to care for a victim of abuse this will

mean respecting and supporting their choices, even if these are not the same choices as the carer would make. This doesn't mean it is 'not OK' to make suggestions, and in a crisis situation – for example, where someone is in immediate danger – then it will be necessary for a carer to be more directive until a situation has been stabilised.

For more information on trauma informed care go to [blueknot.org.au](http://blueknot.org.au), a national centre which advocates for and provides support to people who have experiences of complex trauma.

## Legal Framework

A range of legal measures exist to protect people in Australia who have experienced domestic violence and to prevent further violence.

The following legislation governs responses to incidents of domestic and family violence in NSW:

- *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007*;
- *Crimes Act 1900*;
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*;
- *Young Offenders Act 1997*;
- *Criminal Procedure Act 1986*; and
- *Family Law Act 1975*.

### **NSW Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007**<sup>1</sup>

The primary piece of legislation governing domestic violence matters in NSW, is the *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007* (the “Crimes DPV Act”).

The Crimes DPV Act has the following **aims**:<sup>2</sup>

- (a) to ensure the safety and protection of all persons, including children, who experience or witness domestic violence;
- (b) to reduce and prevent violence by a person against another person where a domestic relationship exists between those persons;
- (c) to enact provisions that are consistent with certain principles underlying the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women; and
- (d) to enact provisions that are consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Crimes DPV Act sets out a framework for applications to be made to the Magistrate’s Court for Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) for the protection of a person against another person with whom he or she has or has had a **domestic relationship**. Further detail about ADVOs is set out below.

According to Section 5 of The Crimes DPV Act, a person has a **domestic relationship** with another person if the person is or has been married to the other person (s 5(1)(a)), is or has been a de facto partner of that other person (s 5(i)(b)) or has or has had an intimate personal relationship with the other person (s 5(i)(c)). However, the the definition of domestic relationship under the Crimes DPV Act also includes:

- (a) A person who is living or has lived in the same household or other residential facility as the person who commits the offence;
- (b) A person who has or has had a relationship involving his or her dependence on the ongoing paid or unpaid care of the person who commits the offence (such as staff of licensed boarding houses); or
- (c) A person who is or has been a relative of the person who commits the offence or in the case of an Aboriginal person or a Torres Strait Islander, is or has been part of the extended family or kin of the other person.

The Crimes DPV Act extends upon the personal violence offences set out in the Criminal Code. Under Section 11, a **domestic violence offence** includes not only personal physical and sexual violence but also those offences that intend to coerce or control a person or cause them to be intimidated and/or fearful.

Section 13 also makes it an offence to stalk or intimidate another person with the intention of causing the other person to fear physical or mental harm.

<sup>1</sup> NSW Government, *Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007*, accessed March 2023 at <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-2007-080>

<sup>2</sup> Section 9

The *Criminal Procedure Act 1986* indicates that domestic violence victims are able to give evidence through a recorded video or audio statement, and the court should be closed when evidence is given (whether given in person or by recording). Evidence may also be given by audio visual link from a place other than the court room.

In proceedings where an offender is self-represented, the offender cannot question the victim directly in evidence (e.g. in cross-examination) but must examine the victim through a court appointed questioner or through the use of court technology.

### Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs)

The Crimes DPV Act provides the legislative framework for the issue of Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs). An ADVO is a civil matter and does not result in a criminal offence unless the ADVO is breached. The aim of an ADVO is to protect a person from future violence. Restrictions are placed on persons against whom an order is made. These restrictions may include not harassing or not approaching the person.

There are two different types of temporary ADVOs that can be made to protect a person until a court decides whether to make a Final ADVO: a Provisional ADVO, and an Interim ADVO.

Police can apply for a Provisional ADVO if they believe that someone needs immediate protection, even if the victim is not willing to make a complaint. The Police may also direct or detain offenders while applying for a Provisional ADVO. The Provisional ADVO will remain in force until it is revoked, the application is withdrawn or dismissed, or until an Interim or Final AVO is made.

An Interim ADVO is made by the court to extend a Provisional ADVO or where the Court agrees that it is necessary for someone to have temporary protection.

The Court has the power to issue a Final ADVO if it is satisfied that a person (applicant) has reasonable grounds to fear that a domestic violence offence will be committed against them.

Section 48 of the Crimes DPV Act enables police to apply for an ADVO on behalf a person experiencing domestic violence, sometimes referred to as a *person in need of protection* ('PINOP').

If the PINOP is aged 16 or over, that person may also apply for an ADVO on their own at the Local Court of NSW. Police are the only authority mandated to apply for ADVOs on behalf of a child under section 48(3) of the Crimes DPV Act. If an ADVO application lists both adults and a child or children (e.g. a parent and a child), the adult can apply to either the Local Court or ask the police to apply for an ADVO.

If there are only children listed as PINOPs in an ADVO application, police are the only authority mandated to make an application under s 48(3) of the Crimes DPV Act.

More information is available from the NSW Government Domestic Violence website<sup>3</sup>, Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme or a local Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service.<sup>4</sup> An individual who wishes to hire a lawyer may contact Legal Aid NSW.

### **Protection of Children**

There are both Federal and State laws which govern the protection of children. The *Family Law Act 1975* governs the resolution of private disputes about the parenting of all children in Australia. In comparison, NSW 'child protection laws' aim to protect children from abuse and neglect.

Due to the substantial overlap between Federal and State Laws in regard to domestic violence and protection of children, there have been calls for the institution of one court to deal with domestic violence, including protection orders, child protection, family law, perhaps even criminal issues.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> NSW Government, "Getting an Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs)", website accessed 1 April 2023 at <https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/children-and-families/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence/police-legal-help-and-the-law/getting-an-apprehended-violence-order--avo.html>

<sup>4</sup> Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, accessed 1 April 2023 at <https://www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au/about-us/our-partners/womens-domestic-violence-court-advocacy-program>

<sup>5</sup> Australian Law Reform Commission (2010), *Family Violence: A National Legal Response*, ALRC Report 114, accessed 1 April 2023 at <https://www.alrc.gov.au/publication/family-violence-a-national-legal-response-alrc-report-114/>

## Federal Family Law Act 1975<sup>6</sup>

In 2006, the Australian Government introduced legislative changes to the *Family Law Act 1975*, in order to increase parental cooperation and responsibility in the separation process and increase the focus on the child's best interests.<sup>77</sup> However, in 2011 amendments were made after research suggested that the co-operative parenting changes made in 2006 may have contributed to increasing rates of reports of family violence and child abuse around relationship breakdown. The main changes to the *Family Law Act* were as follows:

- Section 4AB, now provides that family violence is violent, threatening or other behaviour by a person that coerces or controls a member of the person's family (the family member), or causes the family member to be fearful. For clarity, a new sub-section 4AB(2) provides an open list of the types of circumstances that may constitute family violence under the Act;
- The definition of child abuse has been extended to include two new categories of behaviour. The new definition, at sub-section 4(1) provides that child abuse is physical or sexual assault, serious neglect, and now action causing a child 'serious psychological harm' and expressly including *subjection or exposure to family violence*. Exposure to family violence is explained further by example at sub-sections 4AB(3) and (4);
- Ensuring that the 'need to protect a child from harm' carries more weight than the 'relationship with parents' consideration (s 60CC(2A));
- New provisions requiring the court, in every child-related case, to expressly ask the parties about whether they have any concerns about family violence or child abuse (s 69ZQ(1)(aa));
- In section 60CG, courts must ensure that parenting orders are consistent with any family violence order; and do not expose a person to an unacceptable risk of family violence; and
- Courts must be advised of any ADVOs or other State investigations into domestic violence.

## Mandatory Reporting of Children at Risk of Significant Harm in NSW

The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*<sup>8</sup> (The Care and Protection Act) provides the legislative framework for the reporting of domestic violence incidents which put children at significant risk of harm. Section 23(1)(d), states the circumstances which constitute a reportable incident include:

*the child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious<sup>9</sup> physical or psychological harm.*

A **mandatory reporter** is an individual required by law to report to government authorities when they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm. Mandatory reporters are defined under section 27 of the Care and Protection Act, as people who deliver the following services to children as part of their paid or professional work, or who hold a management position which includes direct responsibility or supervision of such services.

A person in religious ministry, or a person providing religion-based activities to children is a mandatory reporter. This is the case regardless of whether the person is an employee, office-holder or volunteer.

Mandatory reporters also include people who deliver or who supervise the following services:<sup>10</sup>

- Health care (e.g. registered medical practitioners, nurses government and other allied health professionals working in sole practice or in public or private health practices);
- Welfare (e.g. psychologists, social workers, caseworkers and youth workers);

<sup>6</sup> Australian Parliament, *The Family Law Act 1975*, accessed 3 April 2023 at <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2023C00056>

<sup>7</sup> Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse, *Children affected by domestic violence: a literature review*, Report produced for The Benevolent Society, Sydney, 2011. Accessed 26 July 2017 at <http://earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/files/ImpactofDVonChildren.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> NSW Government, *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, accessed 3 April 2023 at <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1998-157>

<sup>9</sup> Here, "serious" means sufficient to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of a family's consent.

<sup>10</sup> NSW Government, *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, accessed 3 April 2023 at <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1998-157#sec.27>

- Education (e.g. teachers, counsellors, principals);
- Children's services (e.g. child care workers, family day carers and home-based carers);
- Residential services (e.g. refuge workers); and
- Law enforcement (e.g. police).

Members of the community and mandatory reporters who suspect that a child or young person is at "risk of significant harm" should report their concerns to the Child Protection Helpline. To help reporters decide whether a case needs to be reported to the Child Protection Helpline, reporters can use the online Mandatory Reporter Guide.<sup>11</sup>

It is also mandatory for any person to report knowledge of most domestic violence offences to the police under s316 of the *Crimes Act 1900*. However, there is a 'reasonable excuse' for not reporting if the alleged victim is an adult and the person believes on reasonable ground that the alleged victim does not wish the information to be report to the police.

---

<sup>11</sup> Childstory Reporter, *Welcome to the ChildStory Reporter Community*, accessed 4 August 2017 at <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>

## **Domestic Abuse: Policy Guidance from *Faithfulness in Service***

All clergy and church workers (whether paid or volunteer leaders) in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney are bound by our national code of conduct, *Faithfulness in Service*, as adopted in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney.

Section 6 of *Faithfulness in Service* addresses **Personal Behaviour**.

In its **Preamble**, it states that *misuse of power* is at the heart of abuse. This includes domestic abuse.

- 6.1 *The personal behaviour and relationships of **clergy and church workers** have a significant impact on the **Church** and the community because they are a model to others. In a context where their responsibility is to care for others, people will especially observe the way in which clergy and church workers exercise power.*
- 6.2 *Abuse of power is at the heart of many relationship problems in the Church and the community. In essence, abuse is one person's misuse of power over another. Sometimes abuse will be a one off event and at other times it will be a pattern of behaviour.*
- 6.3 **Abuse** can take any of several overlapping forms: **bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse**. Abuse in a family or domestic context is commonly known as "family and domestic violence".<sup>1</sup>
- 6.4 *It is important for clergy and church workers to be good citizens and obey the laws of the community, except where those laws conflict with Christian convictions.*

The section entitled "**Standards for clergy and church workers**" states the Church's expectations for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry. This section **unequivocally rules out any domestic abuse** from clergy and church workers.

6.5 *You are not to engage in:*

- *bullying;*
- *emotional abuse;*
- *harassment;*
- *physical abuse;*
- *sexual abuse; or*
- *spiritual abuse.*

6.6 *You are not to **abuse** your spouse, children or other members of your family.*

This section also insists that **church leaders must observe** the law of the land, which obviously includes **laws regarding domestic abuse**.

6.14 *You are to observe the law, other than any law that:*

- *is contrary to the Holy Scriptures;*
- *unjustly prohibits the practice of religion; or*
- *prohibits civil disobedience.*

Section 4 of *Faithfulness in Service* addresses **Pastoral Relationships**.

In its **Guidelines** section, it gives the following guidance regarding **Boundaries** in pastoral ministry.

---

<sup>1</sup> The full definitions of these forms of abuse within *Faithfulness in Service* can be read at the end of this Appendix. It should be noted that these definitions overlap to a significant extent with common secular definitions of domestic abuse, such as those adopted by the diocesan Policy.

- 4.12 *Recognise the limits of your skills and experience. Do not undertake any ministry (such as relationship counselling, counselling for abuse or addictions, or an exorcism) that is beyond your competence or the role for which you have been employed or trained. If in doubt seek advice. A person who requires specialised help should be referred to an appropriately qualified person or agency.*
- 4.13 *Where ministry responsibilities overlap, be aware of the activities, function and style of other clergy and church workers. Consult with these colleagues and co-operate wherever possible.*
- 4.14 *Where your ministry responsibility to one person may conflict with your responsibility to another person to whom you are ministering, or with your own needs, you should seek advice from a colleague or supervisor. Consider the possibility of transferring ministry responsibility for one or both of these to another minister.*

This supports our good practice guidelines, which **require church workers to obtain specialised help** from persons or agencies appropriately qualified in responding to situations where domestic abuse is indicated or alleged.

It also notes the difficulty clergy and church workers can have from the expectations of multiple roles, for example in:

- providing pastoral care both to victim and alleged perpetrator;
- making some kind of investigation of the allegations; and
- being responsible for the adjudication and implementation of some aspects of church discipline should an offender have been or continue in the life of the church.

Also note the following provisions regarding **record keeping and privacy**, which can be especially crucial for safety in situations involving domestic abuse.

- 4.36 *If you are engaged in individual pastoral ministry, consider keeping a factual record of your daily pastoral activity. Record details such as the date, time, place, participants, subject, and any proposed action arising from each activity. Record personal remarks accurately.*
- 4.37 *You need to know the relevant principles of the applicable privacy legislation in relation to the collection, use, disclosure and management of personal information. These have implications for:*
- *the publication of personal information in church directories, newsletters, rosters and websites;*
  - *the recording and publication of voices and images of individuals; and*
  - *the use and security of all personal information, and especially sensitive information, held by clergy and church workers or in church offices.*

Section 3 of *Faithfulness in Service* speaks of **Putting this Code into Practice**.

Its **Guidelines** section make it clear that where you have reason to believe that a clergy person or church worker has perpetrated domestic abuse (breaching standards of the Code at 6.5 and 6.6), then **you have a reporting obligation**, since the threat of domestic abuse certainly creates the risk of harm.

- 3.9 *If you know or have reason to believe that another member of the clergy or another church worker has failed to meet a standard of this Code, other than for **child abuse**, (the reporting of child abuse is addressed in paragraphs 5.14 and 5.15), you should:*
- *where you believe that a person has not suffered harm or is not at the risk of harm, approach the member of the clergy or church worker and identify the concern; or*
  - *where you believe that a person has suffered harm or is at the risk of harm, report this to the **church authority** having responsibility for the member of the clergy or church worker or the **Director of Professional Standards**.*

*If in doubt seek advice from a colleague or supervisor or the Director of Professional Standards without identifying the member of the clergy or church worker.*



- 3.10 *If you know or have reason to believe that another member of the clergy or another church worker has not followed a guideline of this Code, you should approach the member of the clergy or church worker and identify the concern. If you consider that the member of the clergy or church worker is persisting in disregarding the guideline without good reason and a person has suffered harm or is at the risk of harm, you should seriously consider reporting this to the church authority with responsibility for the member of the clergy or church worker or the Director of Professional Standards. If in doubt seek advice from a colleague or supervisor or the Director of Professional Standards without identifying the member of the clergy or church worker.*

Section 3's Preamble makes it clear that domestic abuse or a failure to observe the law could result in clergy or church workers facing formal disciplinary action. Likewise negligence of guidelines in pastoral counselling regarding domestic abuse might result in the requirement to receive specialised help.

- 3.4 *Failure to meet the standards of this Code will indicate an area where clergy and church workers require guidance and specialised help. Such failures may result in formal disciplinary action if the conduct infringes an applicable disciplinary rule of the Church or is a breach of an employment contract.*
- 3.5 *Clergy and church workers are encouraged to follow the guidelines of this Code. Where this is impractical, the exercise of judgement will be required to ensure the safety of those to whom they minister and themselves. Wilful disregard of the guidelines may indicate an area where clergy and church workers require guidance and specialised help.*

## **Definitions**

Please note the following definitions of abuse from *Faithfulness in Service*, Section 2, the **glossary of terms**.

**abuse** in relation to an adult means the following conduct:

- bullying;
- emotional abuse;
- harassment;
- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse; or
- spiritual abuse.

**bullying** means behaviour directed to a person or persons which:

- is repeated;
- is unreasonable (being behaviour that a reasonable person, having considered the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening); and
- creates a risk to their health and safety.

Bullying can include:

- making derogatory, demeaning or belittling comments or jokes about someone's appearance, lifestyle, background, or capability;
- communicating in an abusive manner;
- spreading rumours or innuendo about someone or undermining in other ways their performance or reputation;
- dismissing or minimising someone's legitimate concerns or needs;
- inappropriately ignoring or excluding someone from information or activities;
- touching someone threateningly or inappropriately
- invading someone's personal space or interfering with their personal property;
- teasing, or playing pranks or practical jokes on someone;
- displaying or distributing written or visual material that degrades or offends.

Bullying does not include lawful conduct of clergy or church workers carried out in a reasonable manner, such as:

- disagreeing with or criticising someone's belief or opinions or actions in an honest and respectful way;
- giving information about inappropriate behaviour in an objective way to the person or persons concerned and to any other person with a proper reason for having that information;
- setting reasonable performance goals, standards or deadlines;
- giving information about unsatisfactory performance in an honest and constructive way;
- taking legitimate disciplinary action.
- Cyberbullying is a form of bullying which involves the use of information and communication technologies.

**emotional abuse** means acts or omissions that have caused, or could cause emotional harm or lead to serious behavioural or cognitive disorders. It includes:

- subjecting a person to excessive and repeated personal criticism;
- ridiculing a person, including the use of insulting or derogatory terms to refer to them;
- threatening or intimidating a person;
- ignoring a person openly and pointedly; and
- behaving in a hostile manner or in any way that could reasonably result in another person feeling isolated or rejected.

**harassment** means unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, in relation to another person where the person feels with good reason in all the circumstances offended, belittled or threatened. Such behaviour may consist of a single incident or several incidents over a period of time. It includes:

- making unwelcome physical contact with a person;
- making gestures or using language that could reasonably give offence including continual and unwarranted shouting;
- making unjustified or unnecessary comments about a person's capacities or attributes;
- putting on open display pictures, posters, graffiti or written materials that could reasonably give offence;
- making unwelcome communication with a person in any form (for example, phone calls, email, text messages); and
- stalking a person.

**physical abuse** means any intentional or reckless act, use of force or threat to use force causing injury to, or involving unwelcome physical contact with, another person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving or grabbing. An injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures. It does not include lawful discipline by a parent or guardian.

**sexual abuse** of an adult means sexual assault, sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of an adult. [Note: these terms are further defined in the same section]

**spiritual abuse** means the mistreatment of a person by actions or threats when justified by appeal to God, faith or religion. It includes:

- using a position of spiritual authority to dominate or manipulate another person or group;
- using a position of spiritual authority to seek inappropriate deference from others;
- isolating a person from friends and family members; and
- using biblical or religious terminology to justify abuse.

**Suggested Parish Policy on Domestic Abuse**

**Parish of ..... Policy for Responding to Domestic Abuse**

**All forms of domestic abuse are wrong. Perpetrators must stop.**

1. The primary focus of this Policy is abusive or intimidating behaviour inflicted by an adult against a current or former spouse or partner. (Abuse involving children should follow child protection procedures.) **Domestic abuse** involves a pattern of behaviour that seeks to coerce, control, intimidate, hurt or frighten a person in an intimate or family relationship. Domestic abuse may include, but is not limited to emotional, verbal, financial, psychological, spiritual, cultural, physical and sexual abuse. It can also include social isolation, stalking, image-based or technology facilitated abuse, and threats to harm other people including children, property or pets.

**2. We are committed to safe places which –**

- Recognise equality amongst people,
- Promote a culture of healthy relationships of mutual responsibility in marriages, families and congregations,
- Ensure that all people feel welcomed, respected and safe from abuse,
- Strive to follow good practice in protecting those experiencing domestic abuse,
- Refuse to condone any form of abuse, and
- Enable concerns to be raised and responded to appropriately and consistently.

**3. We uphold *Faithfulness in Service* as our national code of conduct for clergy and church workers, specifically its affirmations that –**

- Abuse of power is at the heart of many relationship problems in the Church and in the community. In essence, abuse is one person’s misuse of power over another. Sometimes abuse will be a one-off event and at other times it will be a pattern of behaviour, (6.2)
- It is important for clergy and church workers to be good citizens and to obey the laws of the community, except where those laws conflict with Christian convictions, (6.4) and
- You are not to abuse your spouse, children or other members of your family (6.6).

**4. We recognise that Domestic abuse requires a serious and realistic response –**

- All forms of domestic abuse cause damage to the victim and are wrong,
- Domestic abuse can occur in all communities, including churches,
- Domestic abuse, if witnessed or overheard by a child, is a form of child abuse by the perpetrator of the abusive behaviour,
- Working in partnership with vulnerable adults and children, statutory authorities and specialist agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of any child or adult suffering abuse,
- Clergy and lay ministers need to obtain advice from those with professional expertise when faced with situations of domestic abuse,
- Clergy should ensure the provision of training about domestic abuse by appropriately qualified professionals or programs to those in leadership positions, safe ministry roles and other pastoral roles, with periodic 'refresher' training.
- Our response should also include 'primary prevention', challenging disrespect and other attitudes or stereotypes, and other social or cultural factors which may allow individual misconduct to flourish.
- Where mistakes in caring for people in difficult situations are made, an apology should be offered and advice sought on how to address any harm caused.

**5. We respect people who come to us for help by –**

- Valuing, respecting and listening to victims of domestic abuse;
- Valuing, respecting and listening to alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse;
- Appreciating the need to ensure a distance is kept between the two; and
- Refusing to condone the perpetration or continuation of any form of abuse.

**6. We uphold Scripture and its abhorrence of abuse in our words and public statements by –**

- Clearly teaching that domestic abuse is wrong and that the Bible should never be interpreted to justify or excuse any form of abuse. Rather a relationship between a husband and wife is to be characterised by love, care and kindness;
- Clearly teaching that the Bible does not condone abuse and should not be interpreted to demand a spouse tolerate or submit to domestic abuse;
- Clearly teaching that the Bible encourages victims to seek safety, that separation for such reason is an appropriate step to take, and that divorce may properly be a way of protecting victims in such tragic circumstances.
- Raising awareness of domestic violence agencies, support services, crisis accommodation, resources and expertise.

**7. We ensure safety first by –**

- Ensuring that those who have experienced domestic abuse can find safety and informed help as a first priority, and can continue to stay safe,
- Taking it Seriously – Ensuring that any disclosures of abuse are taken seriously and not dismissed; also noting that a perpetrator may deliberately undermine a victim by making their own allegation first,
- Getting help from outside – Working with the appropriate statutory authorities during an investigation into domestic abuse, including when allegations are made against a member of the church community,
- Keeping it confidential – Respecting the need for confidentiality within the bounds of good Safe Ministry practice, noting that reporting requirements exist where there is an immediate danger, where a child is at risk of serious harm or where the matter involves a clergy person or church worker as an alleged offender; where a report is required, this should first be discussed with the victim wherever possible, and
- Challenging with Care – Carefully challenging inappropriate behaviour, but only after receiving professional advice, and only in a way that does not place any individual, especially a victim, at increased risk.

**8. We offer pastoral support to those in our care by –**

- Offering informed care – Ensuring that informed and appropriate pastoral care and professional help is offered to any adult, child or young person who has suffered domestic abuse,
- Being guided by the victim – Never pressuring any victim of domestic abuse to forgive, submit to, or restore a relationship with an offender,
- Understanding that reconciliation comes with conditions – Understanding that any reconciliation between victim and offender is dependent principally upon genuine repentance and reformation of the offender,
- Coordinating the care – being familiar with appropriate pastoral care relationships for both victims and alleged or known perpetrators of domestic abuse, identifying and helping provide any specialist support, including separate and independent support for any children involved, and,
- Recognising cultural differences – understanding how cultural norms and values may affect victims or can contribute to abuse being perpetuated.

**If you have any concerns or need to talk to anyone please contact...**

- The Police: dial **000**
  - 24/7 in emergencies where safety is at risk.
- 1800 RESPECT national helpline: **1800 737 732** or [1800respect.org.au](http://1800respect.org.au)
  - 24/7 for sexual assault, & domestic violence counselling and advice.
- Child Protection Helpline: **132 111** or [reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg](http://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg)
  - If you think a child or young person is at risk of harm from abuse.
- Lifeline: **131 114** or [www.lifeline.org.au/get-help](http://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help)
  - 24 hour telephone crisis line.
- Office of the Director of Safe Ministry **9265 1604** or [safeministry.org.au](http://safeministry.org.au)
  - Advice about abuse involving Anglican clergy or church workers

**Draft Safety and Exit plan**

*Ordinarily safety planning would be done with an experienced professional in the field of responding to domestic abuse. However this sample gives a sense of the wide range of issues that would have to be considered.*

**Step 1: I CAN USE SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES:**

- A. If I decide to leave, I will\_\_\_\_\_. (Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, stairwells or fire escapes would you use?)
  
- B. I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them\_\_\_\_\_ (place) in order to leave quickly.
  
- C. I can tell \_\_\_\_\_ about the abuse and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.
  
- D. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department.
  
- E. I will use \_\_\_\_\_ as my code for my children or my friends so they can call for help.
  
- F. If I have to leave my home, I will go \_\_\_\_\_ (Decide this even if you don't think there will be a next time). If I cannot go to the location above, then I can go to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
  
- G. I can also teach some of these strategies to some/all of my children.
  
- H. When I expect we are going to have an argument, I will try to move to a space that is lowest risk, such as \_\_\_\_\_ . (Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons or in rooms without access to an outside door).
  
- I. I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I may be able to give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.

...over

## Step 2: SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Perpetrators often strike back when they believe that the person they are abusing is leaving the relationship.

I can use some or all the following safety strategies:

- A. I will leave money and an extra set of keys with \_\_\_\_\_ so that I can leave quickly.
- B. I will keep copies of important papers and documents or an extra set of keys at \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. I will open a savings account by \_\_\_\_\_, to increase my independence.
- D. Other things I can do to increase my independence include:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- E. The domestic violence program's hot line telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_ and I can seek shelter by calling this hot line.
- F. I understand that if I use my mobile, the following month the telephone bill will tell my perpetrator the numbers that I called after I left. I could get a 'pay as you go' phone, or use a public phone. There are no bills and all communication would be confidential.
- G. I will check with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money in an emergency.
- H. I can leave extra clothes with \_\_\_\_\_.
- I. I will sit down and review my safety plan every \_\_\_\_\_ in order to plan the safest way to leave the residence.
- J. \_\_\_\_\_ (domestic violence advocate or friend) has agreed to help me review this plan.
- K. I will rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with my children.

...over

### **Step 3: SAFETY IN MY OWN RESIDENCE**

There are many things that a person can do to increase her safety in her own residence. It may be impossible to do everything at once, but safety measures can be added step by step.

Safety measures I can use include:

- A. I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- B. I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- C. I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.
- D. I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
- E. I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in my house/apartment.
- F. I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to my house.
- G. I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a reverse charge call to me and to \_\_\_\_\_(friend/ other) or get them a mobile phone in the event that my partner takes the children.
- H. I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. The people I will inform about pick- up permission include:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_(school)
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_(day care staff)
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_(Sunday School teacher)



### **Marriage Preparation: Recommended good practice**

Marriage preparation offers an opportunity to challenge inappropriate behaviour and assumptions about domination, control or abuse, while making it clear that some degree of conflict within an intimate relationship is natural and healthy, if dealt with appropriately.

The principles of understanding humanity (female and male) as made in God's image and of equal worth; of equality amongst people and within relationships; and of not condoning any form of abuse, should underpin any marriage preparation offered by the Church.

Care must be taken if the biblical themes of a wife's submission or a husband's role as 'head' are to be expressed in the marriage vows or other parts of the marriage service, or in marriage preparation more generally. Please spell out what such ideas **do not and must not** involve to avoid any misunderstanding or twisting of Scripture.

For example, any wife's submission must only ever be voluntary. It ought not to involve submitting to disobedience to God or to illegal activity. No wife is spiritually obligated to submit to domestic abuse from her husband.

Likewise husbands are never told to assert authority over their wife. In particular, they are never told to make their wife submit. Any manipulation or hint of coercion of her towards such ends is sin.

Given the high incidence of domestic abuse within marriage, we recommend that clergy and lay people who offer marriage and wedding preparation should have engaged in some training from suitably qualified professionals or programs on issues of domestic abuse. It is important that there is a clear understanding amongst those who offer marriage preparation that domestic abuse is always unacceptable and that domestic abuse breaks the sanctity of marriage.

The subjects regularly dealt with when preparing couples for marriage, e.g. communication, conflict and in particular "How do you deal with your anger?" offer an opportunity for couples to discuss together how their parents dealt with anger, rows and conflict, or how the couple might have dealt with these in previous relationships. Sometimes those who have experienced domestic abuse as children have a very idealised view of marriage.

It is possible that those working with couples hoping to marry may become aware or suspect that abuse is taking place or may take place between the partners. This is always a difficult area to deal with and illustrates the need for training for people involved in this work, but one or more of the following ideas might help in such a situation.

The facilitator might include a statement at the beginning of the 'course' or conversation and again before dealing with a subject such as 'marital conflict' or anger. The following, which may need amending depending on the circumstances, is an example of a form of words that might be appropriate:

*"When we think about relationships in general and our own in particular, there is always a chance that issues may be raised that touch us in a way that leaves us feeling disturbed, uncomfortable or anxious. If this happens you may wish to speak to one of us today more privately or to seek help from a counsellor or other helping organisation."*

If a domestic abuse issue is raised directly or indirectly by one of the couple, the facilitator should not pursue it in the presence of the other: this could be highly dangerous. They may need to find a way to give the person a chance to say more in private, with the object of encouraging them to get one-to-one help from a competent person or organisation.

+++

Because the Prepare-Enrich questionnaires are so widely used among Anglican churches for marriage preparation and marriage enrichment, it is worth reporting briefly on research published by the Prepare-Enrich organisation, entitled, "Spouse Abuse & Marital System based on Enrich" by Shuji G. Asai and David H. Olson, both of the University of Minnesota<sup>1</sup>.

This was research based in the United States from a national sample of over 20,000 couples taking the Enrich questionnaire.

Its literature review noted that one's background (e.g. family abuse in one's own past) and context (e.g. unemployment) can be correlated with higher rates of abuse. It noted that individual traits and behaviour can be significant with victims tending to have low self esteem and to be higher on avoidance. It also showed features of couple interaction, such as good communication and conflict resolution, can be associated with higher relational quality. Conversely, there is an association between family violence and unequal decision making power, with levels of violence higher for wives among husband-dominating patriarchal couples.

Based on self-reporting to the inventory question, "Have you ever been abused (verbally, emotionally, physically, or sexually) by your partner?", over 61% of couples in the study were classified as non-abusing, 16.8% as having the husband abusing, 13.4% having both partners abusing, and 8% having the wife abusing.

Using the Enrich Couple typology, 95% of Vitalised couple types, 88% of Harmonious couple types, and almost 80% of Traditional couple types were classified as non-abusing.

Conversely, less than 28% of Devitalised couple types were non-abusive.

In the middle, 52% of Conflicted couples types were non-abusive. So it was noted that about half of conflicted couples could maintain non-abusive relationships, even when there were significant difficulties reported. That is, unresolved conflict does not always make a marriage abusive.

Of the various Couple scales, the most significant predictors of abuse were lower scores for Positive Couple Agreement in the categories of 'Family and Friends', 'Personality Issues', 'Communications', and 'Conflict Resolution', along with lower rating of 'Couple Closeness'. Lack of 'Couple Flexibility' was also significant.

Couples with a more Egalitarian<sup>2</sup> approach to Role Relationships appeared to be less likely to experience abuse of the wife.

On individual Personality scales, non-abusive couples tended to display both partners scoring higher in self-confidence and assertiveness, and lower in partner dominance and avoidance.

Unsurprisingly, abusive couples have the abused partner tending to be high in avoidance and partner dominance and lower in assertiveness and self-confidence (although not so much with self-confidence in the case where husbands report abuse).

A strength of the research was its broad definition of abuse, including verbal, emotional, physical and sexual. A limit is its self-reporting nature, especially given the likelihood that abuse is underreported. The study sample group was predominantly Caucasian (85%), so results may be different in other ethnic groups.

Another limit would be in applying this to marriage *preparation* since the study only measured those who had already been married for some time, and were engaging in the Enrich inventory. So some caution would be needed in extrapolating findings of correlations to results of those doing the Prepare inventory, although there is intuitive expectation that similar correlations might be found.

Nevertheless, this research may give those engaged in marriage preparation some idea of particular measures to focus on as possible correlates for abuse being more likely as a possibility, especially where domestic abuse is expressed or suspected as a concern.

Steps taken to increase an individual's assertiveness and self-confidence and to develop skills in communication and conflict resolution may be worth considering in this context. But where a proneness to abuse or other serious relational difficulty is suspected, clergy and church workers should carefully consider referrals to trained counsellors or other professionals.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://app.prepare-enrich.com/pe/pdf/research/abuse.pdf>, viewed 1 August 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Note that 'Egalitarian' here in Prepare/Enrich is not defined primarily in theological terms.

### **Doctrine Commission on Divorce and Remarriage**

There are various views among Bible-based Christians about divorce and remarriage. To aid Sydney Anglicans in their consideration of these matters, we note the 2019 Doctrine Commission report entitled, “The Implications of Domestic Abuse for Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage 18/18 The nature of marriage”.<sup>1</sup>

This report also included as an appendix the “Letter to Members of Synod Regarding Domestic Abuse and Remarriage” from the Archbishop at the time, the Most Reverend Glenn Davies, which includes this key paragraph,

*“The Regional Bishops assess each application for remarriage on a case by case basis. In many cases of domestic abuse, it is evident that the abusing spouse is an unbeliever who has demonstrably ‘abandoned’ the marriage by the manner in which they have treated their spouse (notwithstanding the fact that the victim may be the one who leaves the marital home for reasons of safety). Even in cases where the abusing spouse still claims to be a believer, the bishops recognise that he or she is acting like an unbeliever in perpetrating domestic abuse. In such cases the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5:11 may well apply, so that the person is treated as an unbeliever. It is also possible, however, that there are circumstances where there are legitimate grounds for divorce, which may not satisfy the biblical grounds for remarriage.”*

---

<sup>1</sup> The PDF was accessed on 4 April 2023 and is available at <https://www.sds.asn.au/2019-doctrine-commission-report-implications-domestic-abuse-marriage-divorce-and-remarriage>

**Walking Through It: A Family Violence Survivor's Reflection**

The author of this article has asked that her name be withheld.

*(Used by permission, courtesy of The Gospel Coalition, Australia<sup>1</sup>)*

I recently wrote a letter to ministers, entitled "[Things I wish you understood: An open letter to ministers from a family violence survivor](#)." The response has been humbling. I'm glad it resonated with the experience of many, because it reminds me that I'm not alone, and that nor am I crazy because sometimes I have to fight with my emotions and body to get control again. Thank you to the sisters and brothers who have said "that's me, too." May God bless, comfort and heal you also.

I'm also more glad than I can say for the people who said it would help them to love their flock better. That's what I was praying for. My experience won't speak to everyone, and won't be applicable to everyone, but if it starts a conversation or raises awareness, then I thank God for that. If it means that I or someone else might have a better chance of hearing and understanding what the Bible says on some of those more difficult passages, so much the better. That was my heart—I want to hear and learn, and sometimes I can't because of what I've been through. I'm not alone in that.

I've been encouraged privately to reflect and share on the experience of coming forward in the church. I am profoundly grateful for the godly men and women who walked through it with me. My experiences were generally positive but there were moments that weren't so positive as well, and moments which might have gone much, much worse but for the grace of God. I am somewhat unusual, from what I can gather, in that I didn't meet with anyone (outside of my then-husband) who treated me with harshness or ungraciousness. Even those who weren't helpful still tried to treat me with love. My heart aches for those who have not been met with grace and love.

Here are some things that I've been reflecting on about my own experience:

**1. Listening to me, and believing me were the biggest gifts anyone could give me.**

Those who listened and believed will have my everlasting gratitude and love. The first person I shared with was not a minister, but a friend who by the grace of God had walked this journey before. I didn't realise that at the time because I didn't actually know what was happening to me. I just knew my life was suddenly spinning out of control, and I was scared. She knew the value of listening and believing. She'd had experience. She knew what to do on every level: emotional, spiritual, practical. She validated what I told her—the first tentative forays into shattering the illusion I had been so carefully maintaining. I didn't tell her the whole picture, just the part that was upsetting me the most at the time. She treated me with respect, grace and dignity. That led me to go further, to bring deeper wounds forward to see if perhaps—breathtakingly—they might meet with tenderness too. *She believed me, and she told me she believed me.*

**2. It was an incredibly scary thing to bring the leadership of my church into the picture.**

I knew them to be men of gentleness and compassion, but I had seen what I thought was gentleness and compassion turn into harshness and anger before. I was terrified of being dismissed. I was petrified of being told that I was in sin, that I needed to go back. I didn't know what I would do if they did. The weight of that possibility made it difficult to breathe. I thought I was going to have a heart attack from the mere thought of having to choose between going back or defying the leadership of my church. The choice *felt* like one between my life and sanity, and my very salvation. My salvation was never actually on the line but, battered and broken as I was, that is what it felt like. It was agony.

**3. Common sense isn't really enough in these situations.**

The norms of relationships don't apply. The nature of abuse makes all sorts of things impossible. I couldn't do counselling with my then-husband. Any attempts to discuss the issues led to an escalation of abuse. When my pastor accidentally broke my confidence in discussion with my then-husband, I

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://australia.thegospelcoalition.org/article/walking-through-it-a-family-violence-survivors-reflection>

was placed in harm's way, and again received a tirade of abuse that left me trembling and sobbing. Thankfully, my pastor learned from that and was very careful not to inadvertently break my confidence again. **He was also willing to listen to the advice of those who had more training in abuse than he did.** It is an area which requires knowledge and understanding, and I know that his willingness to listen and learn from his mistakes had positive outcomes for me.

**4. I needed professional help to recover.**

I drew near to God, and dug deep into my Bible, but I am indebted to the Christian counsellor I worked with for many years, and still work with today. Romans 12:2 talks of not being conformed any longer to the world, but renewing our minds, so that we can work out what God's will is. God used my counsellor mightily in that. So much in my thinking had been warped by abuse that I needed to re-evaluate everything I had ever learned or thought I knew about marriage, submission and headship. The process of sorting through what the Bible actually said and what had been twisted was long and arduous. The process still continues, and probably always will.

**5. I needed, and still need, clear and unambiguous teaching on these points.**

In renewing my mind, I didn't and don't want secular views to form the basis of my understanding. I don't want to abandon biblical teachings on headship, respect, submission or divorce. I want my views and understanding to be rooted in the Bible and nothing else. Marriage is God's good plan, and His intention and design for it are what I want and need to understand. Abuse is not part of His plan, and it has warped my understanding. My last letter was a plea for ministers to understand that they can help immensely in this. I want to hear from preachers who've thought, prayed and read deeply about abuse and marriage, and can steer me past the rocks and the pitfalls that abuse created, and for which my often faulty prior understanding laid the groundwork. The best help I have in my recovery is understanding what God actually says about me, about the way I was treated and about marriage in general.

**6. It was the compassionate and faithful teaching of a pastor which God used to begin open my eyes to the truth of my situation.**

I had no idea I was being abused, but I was hurting over what was happening in my marriage, and desperately wondering if the problem really was me. I wondered if I really was being called to submit to this, and what if anything, I could do to make things better. I wondered if this was normal. Over the years and months before I finally left my marriage, this pastor preached through various books of the Bible. Every single time something about marriage or the roles of men and women came up, he took the time to gently and compassionately point out what those passages *didn't* mean, as well as what they did. His was the sole voice of hope I heard, and it was powerful because he was an authority figure. Abuse is isolating. I was afraid to discuss my marriage with anyone else and afraid to read or research on the subject. God used the voice of this pastor to remind me that the way I was being treated wasn't His will, even though I was a long way from leaving or even understanding that it was abuse. His voice called me back to God, back to prayer and reading the Bible, rather than hardening me against God in my pain.

**7. The people who truly comforted me were okay with the mess and didn't try to fix it.**

My life was in tatters. My mental and physical health was breaking under the strain of what was happening, and the torrent of abuse that leaving unleashed. The people who truly gave me comfort loved me in the midst of that. They sat with me, they looked after me. They let me cry when I needed to, and listened to my doubts and fears and anger. They didn't see my anxiety and depression as a spiritual failure on my part, but as the direct and natural result of my experience. They encouraged me to seek help. They prayed with me, for strength and courage and reliance on God in the midst of the mess. They never gave me platitudes, and their faith was not rocked by my suffering. When they offered the occasional Bible verse, it was because it was something they had *lived*, and had helped them. In the manner of 2 Corinthians 1:3—4, they comforted me with the comfort they had been given and continually drew my eyes to the God of all comfort.

**8. Some people were really uncomfortable with my suffering and wanted to offer quick fixes.**

One woman listened sympathetically, and then told me that Romans 8:28 meant that God would put my marriage back together again. She couldn't conceive that the "good" God was working for was to

make me more like Christ, and that didn't necessarily come with a fairy-tale ending. Another implied that I was giving way to negative thinking and outlined what I needed to do to win the battle of my mind. The hearts of both were in the right place, and I loved them for their intent, but it wasn't at all helpful. I didn't need to be offered false promises that were a distortion of God's Word. I didn't need to feel blamed for my mental health crumbling under the strain, and feel like it was being attributed to some lack of discipline or sin on my part. The reality was, I was walking with God more closely than I ever had before, and I believed that the "good" Romans 8:28 promised could only be defined my God, not dictated human desires. I was clinging to that verse, but trusting God for what it would look like.

**9. I equally distrusted those who were willing to rewrite the Bible so that I wouldn't be hurt, and those who applied it rigidly and legalistically, without compassion.**

It was a very long time before I asked my leadership team if I could seek divorce. They never pushed me about it one way or another, but gave me space to ask when and if I was ready. I watched, and listened to everything they said, and every sermon they preached. I'd seen the way that they took care to show compassion while still preaching the truth. I didn't ask the question until I was certain that their desire for obedience to God was as strong as their compassion for His flock. I needed them to have both qualities in equal measure to feel safe asking. If they had told me I had to remain unmarried, I would have submitted to that, but I needed to know that they would understand what they were actually asking of me, and understood the pain it would cause. I needed to know they would be there if I had to live out that path. When I did ask, they gave me clear, reasoned answers from the Bible; answers that I will not detail here, as to do so would require more detail of my circumstances than is safe to give.

**10. The decision to walk away from my marriage was the most painful one I have ever made.**

I had prayed so hard over the years, and done everything I could do to have the quiet and gentle spirit that 1 Peter 3 talks about. I had wrestled with God over injustices and hurts, begged for change and railed at Him over the circumstances. I was repeatedly brought lovingly to my knees in repentance as He chose to deal with MY heart within the marriage. At the point when it became untenable and I left physically, I had long since learned that in my particular case God was going to deal with MY sinfulness with me, regardless of what my spouse was doing. He was going to make me like Christ, and I would need to trust Him in the journey, because He loved me. He would deal with my spouse in His time, not mine. It was hard, and I struggled with it often. When the crisis point came, I was taken by surprise.

**11. God is incredibly faithful.**

The more I reflect on my journey, the more I see His merciful provision to me, both in practical supports and emotional and spiritual ones. He drew close to me, and when I feared that I would lose absolutely everything I held dear, I learned that He is truly enough, and that His gift of salvation is the one thing that cannot be taken from me. Much in my life looks different than I had hoped, but the deep knowledge of His faithfulness and love is a gift beyond words.

## Regional Councils' Annual Reports for 2022

(A compilation of extracts from the annual reports of the Regional Councils.)

### Key Points

- Under clause 9(2) of the *Regions Ordinance 1995* each Regional Council must present an annual report of its proceedings and the exercise of its general functions for inclusion in the Standing Committee's report to Synod for that year
- These reports are in addition to the annual reports prepared by the Regional Councils and tabled at the Synod under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*.

### Background

1. Under clause 9(2) of the *Regions Ordinance 1995*, each Regional Council must present to the Standing Committee an annual report of its proceedings and the exercise of its general functions under clause 6 in sufficient time each year to enable the Standing Committee to include the report in the report for that year of the Standing Committee to Synod.
2. The general functions of the Regional Councils under clause 6 are –
  - (a) to carry out or assist in carrying out any resolutions passed by the Synod or the Standing Committee and referred to it for implementation,
  - (b) to develop ministry strategies in the Region,
  - (c) to assess applications for grants in the Region made or referred to it,
  - (d) to make grants or loans from money (consistent with any trusts on which that money may be held) available to it for distribution or for lending,
  - (e) to accept gifts and grants,
  - (f) to raise and expend money for any purpose connected with ministry in the Region,
  - (g) to employ persons for any purpose connected with ministry within the Region, and to dismiss any person so employed,
  - (h) to manage and control any endowment held for the Region as a whole,
  - (i) to discuss matters affecting the Region and to disseminate information in the Region,
  - (j) to make recommendations to the Archbishop about alterations to regional boundaries, and
  - (k) to exercise such other functions as the Synod or the Standing Committee may from time to time prescribe.
3. The following are the reports from the Regional Councils for 2022 for the purposes of clause 9(2). These reports are extracts from the annual reports prepared by the Regional Councils and tabled at the Synod under the *Accounts, Audits and Annual Reports Ordinance 1995*.

### Northern Regional Council

4. The Council met twice during the year.
5. The Council meeting enabled discussion of a range of matters relating to ministry strategies in the region, including consideration of ways the Council might assist parish ministry in line with the Diocesan Mission.
6. The coronavirus pandemic restricted the Council's ability to meet face to face and to undertake a range of activities that it had planned or usually would have undertaken, such as an annual meeting of region clergy.
7. In accordance with its authority and responsibilities under relevant ordinances, in March 2022 the Council agreed to amalgamation of St Andrew's, Wahroonga and St Paul's, Wahroonga Ecclesiastical Districts effective 1 January 2022. In November 2022, the Council agreed to

amalgamation of St Martin's Anglican Church, Killara, and St Peter's East Lindfield Anglican Church Ecclesiastical Districts with effect from 1 January 2023.

### **South Sydney Regional Council**

8. The South Sydney Regional Council serves the South Sydney Region of the Diocese of Sydney which includes the Inner West, Sydney City, Eastern Suburbs, and Bayside Mission Areas. The South Sydney Region also includes the parish of Lord Howe Island and the Church of England on Norfolk Island.
9. Four Council meetings were held in 2022. Further consultation occurred via phone and email.
10. In 2022, the main activities of the Council either by way of report or action was as follows –
  - Receiving reports from, and providing approved funding for, the Church of England on Norfolk Island (\$30,700), the Parish of Sans Souci (\$10,000), and the Parish of South Sydney (\$10,000),
  - Administering the Synod Grant for Lord Howe Island (\$22,000),
  - Providing financial support for a Regional Ministry Conference,
  - Gave consideration to and recommended that the Archbishop establish a new Mission Area in the Region,
  - Considered and approved the amalgamation of the Parish of Drummoyne with the Parish of Ashfield, Five Dock and Haberfield,
  - Adopted five priority areas for future activities: Growth Areas, Multicultural Ministry, Indigenous Ministry, Children and Youth, and Ministry Training, and
  - Reviewed progress on the appointment of clergy to vacant parishes and various property development proposals.

### **South Western Regional Council**

11. The Regional Council has continued to discuss the most strategic gospel use of its resources in light of ministry needs across the region and needs in the Greenfields. A reconfiguration of assets has been the first step in this consideration. The Council continues to meet in various parishes across the region and hearing from rectors in order to get a closer view of ministry on the ground, aiding in more informed strategic decision making.

### **Western Sydney Regional Council**

12. The main committees are the Executive Committee, the Ordinance Review Panel and the Architectural Panel.
13. The Council met on 3 occasions during 2022 via Zoom.
14. The main areas of consideration included assisting parishes with a response to COVID-19 lockdowns and related matters, parish vacancies and new appointments, strategic partnerships between parishes, building projects in the region, approving parish boundary adjustments, assisting a parish in negotiations with the Anglican Schools Corporation over property use, assisting a parish to regenerate ministry in a socially disadvantaged area and encouraging some ministers into the Reach Australia development program.

### **Wollongong Regional Council**

15. The Wollongong Regional Council met three times during 2022, on the evenings of 26 April, 26 July and 11 October. The meetings were held in Wollongong with each meeting preceded by a meal.



16. Bishop Peter Hayward and the Regional Council worked closely to further support ministry across the Region. This included –
- providing financial support for Centre for Ministry Development (**CMD**) consultancy for parishes working in marginalised communities,
  - operating a pilot program to help fund new workers in parishes (Keiraville and Port Kembla for 2022),
  - support for parishes of Wollongong and Corrimal as they moved towards a hub-and-spoke amalgamation,
  - hosting a 3-day regional conference for ministry leaders on the theme of perseverance in ministry,
  - providing financial support with subsidised demountable at Denham Court,
  - meeting with and support of Mission Area leaders,
  - support for Rectors,
  - ongoing support for English as a Second Language (**ESL**) classes –
    - ESL classes were delivered in 13 Parishes across the Region,
    - Support through provision of office space for the Regional Anglicare ESL Coordinator, Mrs Sue Radkovic,
  - ongoing support for Indigenous Ministries –
    - Shoalhaven Aboriginal Community Church in partnership with the Sydney Anglican Indigenous Peoples' Ministry Committee (**SAIPMC**), including coordinating fundraising to help establish new indigenous pastor Brendon Garlett, and
  - provision of bridging finance to a parish whose builder folded in the middle of a major building project, enabling the works to be completed without incurring substantial cost increases.
17. During 2022 funding from the Region's assets was allocated to the specific ministry in the South West growth sector –

<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
CMD	Consultancy – marginalised areas	\$20,000
Keiraville Parish	Grant – new worker	\$10,000
Port Kembla Parish	Grant – new worker	\$20,000

18. The Council received reports from Bishop Hayward and the Assistant to the Bishop at each meeting.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

## 42/18 Reporting on the National Redress Scheme

(A report from the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- By resolution 42/18 the Synod requested an annual report, with appropriate protections of confidentiality, to be provided to each ordinary session of the Synod throughout the life of the National Redress Scheme, including high level numbers and claim amounts averages.
- This report provides the requested information relating to claims from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2023.

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Synod with a brief report regarding the status of applications under the National Redress Scheme (**NRS**), in accordance with the request of Synod resolution 42/18.

### Recommendation

2. Synod receive this report.

### Background

3. At its ordinary session in 2018, the Synod passed resolution 42/18 in the following terms –

‘Synod requests that Sydney Anglican (National Redress Scheme) Corporation and other diocesan organisations that become a Participating Institution under the National Redress Scheme report all applications received to the Director of Professional Standards to enable an annual report, with appropriate protections of confidentiality, to be provided to each ordinary session of the Synod throughout the life of the National Redress Scheme that includes –

- (a) the number of applications for redress which have been received,
- (b) the number and total and average amount of redress offers made,
- (c) the number and total and average amount of redress offers accepted, and
- (d) the number of persons to whom a direct personal response has been provided.’

### Discussion

4. The National Redress Scheme (**NRS**) commenced on 1 July 2018 and is scheduled to continue for 10 years until 30 June 2028. The Standing Committee has strongly encouraged all diocesan organisations which could possibly have any responsibility for claims of child sexual abuse to become part of the scheme. The Standing Committee has been advised that all relevant organisations subject to the control of Synod, and all schools located in the Diocese of Sydney and known as Anglican, are participants in the NRS.
5. In accordance with Synod Resolution 42/18, diocesan organisations have been asked to report to the Director of Professional Standards (now the Director of Safe Ministry) all applications received to enable an annual report, with appropriate protections of confidentiality, to be provided to each session of Synod.
6. The Director of Safe Ministry has received formal reports from 9 out of 25 relevant diocesan organisations. These figures cover the five years from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2023 –

- (a) the number of applications for redress which have been received – 121.
  - (b) the number and total and average amount of redress offers made (in addition to previous payments made by the diocese) – 82 offers made for a total of \$3,976,228.99 with an average amount of \$48,490.59.
  - (c) the number and total and average amount of redress offers accepted (in addition to previous payments made by the diocese) – 73 offers accepted for a total of \$3,626,883.99 with an average amount of \$49,683.34.
  - (d) the number of persons to whom a direct personal response has been provided – 9.
7. It is noted that there is no requirement for an organisation to report to the Director of Safe Ministry in the event that no claims were made. Therefore, it is understood that organisations who did not make a report, or did not include data from earlier financial years in their report, did not have claims in the relevant period(s).
8. It is also noted that some diocesan organisations included provisions for counselling and administrative/ legal costs in their reporting figures while other organisations did not.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

14 August 2023

## **Ministry Spouse Support Fund Annual Report for 2022**

(A report from the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.)

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the operation of the Ministry Spouse Support Fund (**MSSF**).

### **Recommendation**

2. Synod receive this report.

### **Background**

3. At its meeting on 15 April 2019, the Standing Committee, among other things, asked that –
  - (a) a report be provided regarding the Ministry Spouse Support Fund (**MSSF**) to the Standing Committee by June each year (commencing in 2020) detailing the total amount distributed from the MSSF and the number of ‘cases’ involved in the previous calendar year; along with an indication of the ongoing suitability of the level of funding and any additional commentary felt useful, and
  - (b) a preliminary report be provided to the Standing Committee in July 2019 indicating the initial use of the MSSF in its first six months (for promotion to the Synod).

### **Use of the MSSF**

4. During the reporting period, the calendar year of 2022, payments totalling \$57,457.00 were made from the MSSF to three ministry spouses. None of the recipients had previously received payments from the fund. Spouses also received pastoral support from the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**) Chaplain.
5. The MSSF is administered by the ODSM, however the support and partnership of the Archbishop, Regional Bishops, Archdeacon for Women’s Ministry, Anglicare Family and Domestic Violence Advisor, and Anglicare counselling services have been much appreciated by the ODSM and the recipients of the fund. This support and partnership has been vital in assisting victim-survivors towards financial and sustained independence and in protecting their children.
6. Since its inception, and to the end of the reporting period, payments totalling \$129,312.97 have been made from the fund. Each of the spouses who have received payment to date have been women.

For and on behalf of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.

BELINDA BURN  
**Chaplain**

3 August 2023

# Safe Ministry Board and Office of the Director of Safe Ministry Annual Report 2022-2023

(A report from the Safe Ministry Board and the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.)

## Introduction

1. This report is provided under the *Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001* (cl 20) and the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017* (cl 86) for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 (**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 Board Ordinance 2001*.
4. Following the passing of the *Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001 Amendment Ordinance 2022* (**Amendment Ordinance**) at Synod last year, the Professional Standards Unit Oversight Committee and the existing Safe Ministry Board were amalgamated to become one entity in the form of a new Safe Ministry Board.
5. The purpose of the SMB is to oversee safe ministry and ministry standards in the Diocese, namely through the promotion of safe ministry to children and other vulnerable persons and oversight of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**) (cl 6).
6. The members of the SMB over the reporting period prior to the passing of the Amendment Ordinance were the Rev Dr Keith Condie (Chair), Dr Tim Channon, Ms Stephanie Cole, the Rev Steve Dinning, the Rev Tom Hargreaves, the Rev Gary O'Brien, the Rev Paul Sampson, Dr Ruth Shatford AM and Ms Beth Teuben.
7. The SMB met 3 times in the reporting period before the passing of the Amendment Ordinance.
8. The members of the new SMB following the passing of the Amendment Ordinance were Dr Tim Channon, Ms Stephanie Cole, the Rev Steve Dinning, the Rev Tom Hargreaves, Bishop Peter Lin, the Rev Gary O'Brien, Ms Beth Teuben, Ms Nicola Warwick-Mayo (Chair) and Dr Katie Watson (appointed 27 April 2023).
9. The new SMB appointed Ms Beth Teuben to be Children's Advocate under clause 16 of the *Safe Ministry Board Ordinance 2001*.
10. The new SMB met 4 times in the reporting period.
11. The SMB receives and monitors accounting reports for the ODSM. These accounts are included in the Synod Fund Reports provided to members of Synod.

## Office of the Director of Safe Ministry

12. There was change in the name of the office following the passing of the Amendment Ordinance from the Professional Standards Unit to the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.
13. The ODSM team consists of Mr Lachlan Bryant as Director of Safe Ministry, Mr Stephen Coleman as Assistant Director of Safe Ministry, Mrs Belinda Burn as ODSM Chaplain, Mrs Stacie Pakula as Legal Officer/Executive Assistant to the Director, Ms Rosemary Angus as ODSM Team Administrator, Mrs Kylie Williams as Training Consultant for Safe Ministry, Archdeacon Neil Atwood as Parish Consultant for Safe Ministry, Mrs Brenda Sheppard as Administrative and Safe Ministry Support, Ms Elenne Ford as Dispute Resolution Consultant, and Legal Assistants Ms Isabella Newton and Mr Chris Kim.
14. ODSM Legal Assistants Mr Austin Irwin and Ms Naomie Nguyen completed their service with the office in August 2022 and January 2023 respectively, and at which time Ms Isabella Newton, then Mr Chris Kim, joined the team. We are thankful for the contribution of Austin and Naomie during their years of service at ODSM and wish them well in their future careers.
15. In practice much of the work of the ODSM derives from the SMB, 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.

## Safe Ministry Website and Blueprint Policy Documents

16. The [Safe Ministry website](#) and the Safe Ministry Blueprint policy model were launched at Synod in 2015 (Resolution 24/15). 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.

## Selection and Screening of Clergy and Church Workers

17. The ODSM 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**), a National Register check and a "Safe Ministry Check," also referred to in this context as the Confidential Lifestyle Questionnaire (**CLQ**), which is now mandatory for all church workers being licensed or authorised for ministry. The ODSM provides ongoing support and advice to office holders, parishes and organisations in this regard.

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

18. All candidates for ordination by the Archbishop are required to complete a comprehensive screening and disclosure through the CLQ. This is administered by Ministry Training and Development (**MT&D**) in consultation with the ODSM. The CLQ was updated following the introduction of the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020*.
19. Ordination/ministry candidates undergo extensive assessment and screening by way of reference-checking, general psychological testing, interviews, chaplaincy supervision reports and Moore College reports. An ODSM 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.
20. All paid lay church ministers in the Diocese are required to apply for the Archbishop's authority. This involves their completing a comprehensive screening and disclosure through the CLQ with the applicable Regional Bishop or his representative. This process must be undertaken before a person commences in a lay minister position.

## Screening of Lay Church Workers

21. 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.
22. 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.

## Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020

23. The *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* introduced the new Safe Ministry Assessment and consolidated existing requirements for safe ministry to children in the Diocese of Sydney. The Assessment involves the completion of the Safe Ministry Check by all volunteers engaging in ministry to children, including junior leaders aged 13 to 17.
24. The ODSM has implemented an online system to help Parishes with the administration of the Safe Ministry Assessment process along with resources to help equip Rectors and their Authorised Delegates to consider and assess applications. Since the online adult volunteer Safe Ministry Check form was launched more than 10,100 people have completed and submitted forms. The requirements of the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* appear to be widely understood by ministers and Safe Ministry Representatives and there is a general level of compliance.
25. The Safe Ministry Check/Assessment process must be completed before a person is appointed to a role that involves ministry to children. Churches are encouraged to make the most of the Safe Ministry Check/Assessment process as a pastoral opportunity to engage with volunteer leaders with care and sensitivity regarding personal godliness and accountability and to address possible areas of sinful behaviour or past harm. Good systems for induction and the ongoing training of existing leaders strengthens the safe ministry of our churches and aligns with standard 5 and 7 of the Child Safe Standards.
26. For more information see the [Safe Ministry website](#).

## Requirements and Expectations of Behaviour

27. [Faithfulness in Service](#) is the Diocesan code of conduct for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry for clergy and church workers.

## Faithfulness in Ministry Conference 2023

28. All licensed clergy and authorised lay ministers in the Diocese are required to attend the Archbishop's Faithfulness in Ministry Conference once every three years, which is organised and paid for by ODSM.
29. The Faithfulness in Ministry Conference for 2023 was held in five locations across the Diocese from 5 to 9 June 2023 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm each day. The seminars were promoted with the theme of 'Entrusted: Sharing The Gospel and Our Lives,' focusing on topics relating to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**Royal Commission**): protective behaviours (recommendation 16.40) and pastoral supervision (recommendation 16.5b). Archbishop Kanishka Raffel preached on 1 Thessalonians 2 at the start of each day. During the morning sessions Canon Craig Roberts, CEO of Youthworks set the scene for protective behaviours in the Diocesan context, and Mrs Andrea Musulin, CEO of Protective Behaviours WA, presented on faith-based protective behaviours training for churches. The afternoon sessions addressed the topic of pastoral supervision for those in pastoral ministry. These sessions began with a talk by Pastor David McDonald, and included some videos, an interview, and a presentation from Archdeacon Kara Hartley on the Diocesan response, together with a panel for questions.

30. Registrations at each of the sessions were as follows –

<i>Date</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Registrations</i>
5 June	Rooty Hill	406
6 June	Carlingford	402
7 June	Figtree	201
8 June	Castle Hill	203
9 June	Hoxton Park	171
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,383</b>

31. A simple online course utilising video recordings of the main presentations of the day will be made available to the 223 people who provided an apology because they were unable to attend due to sickness or other circumstances. We will be following up those who neither participated nor provided an apology for not attending the Conference.
32. We have received 679 feedback surveys from attendees to date. Generally, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and suggestions for how the seminars can be improved were also received. We are continuing to consider the feedback received which will help to inform the content and format of our next conference.
33. We are thankful for the partnership, support and collaboration of SDS, Anglicare and Moore Theological College to help make the Faithfulness in Ministry Conference for 2023 a great success.

## **Regular and Comprehensive Training and Support of Clergy and Church Workers**

### **Safe Ministry Training – Safe Ministry Essentials/Refresher**

34. The Safe Ministry Essentials course remains the mandated safe ministry training for the Diocese for all adult persons working with children or youth, followed by the *Safe Ministry Refresher* course every 3 years. These courses are available online (*Essentials Online* and *Refresher Online* respectively).
35. Our Safe Ministry Training courses were updated in the reporting period following the name change to ODSM, the publication of *Faithfulness in Service* 2022 edition, updating web addresses and information about the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
36. The Diocese is a member and training provider of the National Council of Churches' Safe Church Program. There are 36 independent churches and other dioceses who are members of the Program across Australia. As a training provider our training is recognised by other Program members.
37. The numbers of people who enrolled in online safe ministry training over the reporting period are as follows –

<b>Online Safe Ministry Training</b>	
Essentials	2,491
Essentials – Non-Anglican	569
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,060</b>
Refresher	2,219
Refresher – Non-Anglican	469
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>2,688</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5,748</b>



38. The current costs charged for online training for Anglicans are \$20 for Essentials and \$15 for Refresher, and \$30 for Essentials and \$25 for Refresher for non-Anglicans.
39. We continue to receive feedback for the online training and look at ways for suggested improvements to be incorporated, where possible. Some recent changes have included reminder emails to complete the training after the webinar and educating people on the correct course to complete (particularly if their training has expired). We have also installed new reminder emails to help to prompt people to complete their training every 3 years.
40. Face-to-face training was offered at 24 locations across the Diocese 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>	
Essentials	120
Refresher	119
<b>Total</b>	<b>239</b>

41. 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.
42. We continue to look at ways to streamline our processes, particularly for face-to-face training, as numbers for face-to-face training have not returned to pre-COVID levels.
43. We are grateful to our team of face-to-face trainers and online training presenters and producers who help the system to run smoothly and effectively.
44. For more information, please visit the [Safe Ministry training website](#).
45. Apart from the website, the key contacts for safe ministry training inquiries are –
  - Mrs Brenda Sheppard, Safe Ministry Training Administrator: [brenda@safeministry.org.au](mailto:brenda@safeministry.org.au).
  - Mrs Kylie Williams, Safe Ministry Training Consultant: [kylie@safeministry.org.au](mailto:kylie@safeministry.org.au).

### Training of Ministry/Ordination Candidates, Clergy and Authorised Lay Ministers

46. 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.
47. All licensed clergy and authorised lay ministers in the Diocese must have satisfactorily completed safe ministry training within the 3 years prior to their licence being issued and every 3 years thereafter, while the licence continues.

### Safe Ministry for Junior Leaders Online Course

48. Our Safe Ministry Junior Leaders course, for junior leaders in youth and children’s ministry aged between 13 and 17, was completed by 334 junior leaders from parishes across the Diocese during the reporting period. This is a significant increase from the previous reporting period when only 34 completed the course.
49. The course has been carefully structured with age-appropriate language and content. A prerequisite of the course is for parents and the Rector to authorise the junior leader’s enrolment and for a support scaffold to be in place through their local parish, involving a Training Mentor, while the course is being conducted. The Junior Leaders Group Management System assists Training Mentors to manage the registration process and track participants’ progress through the course. There are 244 of these groups in place in parishes across the Diocese (down from the last reporting period following the removal of long-unused groups and the merging of training groups in a number of parishes).
50. Following the introduction of the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020*, the Junior Leaders Online Course is mandatory for all leaders in youth and children’s ministry aged between 13 and 17 years.

51. The course is offered free of charge and is only available to those ministering in the Diocese of Sydney. Follow this [link](#) for more information.

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

52. The Know Domestic Abuse online course was launched at Synod in October 2019 by the ODSM Chaplain and Ms Lynda Dunstan, Anglicare Domestic Violence Advisor. Resources and awareness raising packs for responding to domestic abuse were provided to each church in the Diocese to coincide with the launch.
53. The SMB encourages all people interested in undertaking the Know Domestic Abuse course to do so. The course is particularly pertinent for clergy and church workers as it provides practical training and awareness in the complex area of responding appropriately to domestic abuse. The course will help clergy and church workers to understand and comply with the Sydney Diocese's *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines*. The course is available free of charge.
54. There were 226 enrolments in the course during the reporting period with 56 people completing the course.
55. See this [link](#) for more information about the course.
56. For resources to help raise awareness of domestic abuse, visit the [Know Domestic Abuse website](#).

### Translation of Materials and Resources

57. Over the last few years, the ODSM has been working on translating key safe ministry materials and resources into other language groups. So far, this work has involved the following documents being translated into the following languages –
- Faithfulness in Service code of conduct (Chinese)
  - Domestic Abuse – Flow Chart (Chinese, Korean, Arabic)
  - Domestic Abuse – An Expansive Description of Domestic Abuse (Chinese, Korean, Arabic)
  - Domestic Abuse – Doctrine Commission on The Use and Misuse of Scripture with Regard to Domestic Abuse (Chinese, Korean, Arabic)
58. To access these materials visit [here](#) (for Faithfulness in Service) and [here](#) for domestic abuse materials.

### Safe Ministry Representatives (SMRs)

59. Since 2008 it has been mandatory for each parish to nominate a Safe Ministry Representative (**SMR**). The role of SMRs in parishes continues to be pivotal in ensuring parishes comply with safe ministry requirements. Archdeacon Neil Atwood, Parish Consultant for Safe Ministry, plays an invaluable service in supporting, resourcing and equipping SMRs in their role.
60. As at the time of writing, the Registry has been notified of 272 SMRs appointed by parishes (including ENC churches).
61. During the reporting period –
- (a) eight Zoom training sessions were run, aimed at new or recently appointed SMRs,
  - (b) six parish-based audits were undertaken with an SMR and their Rector, and
  - (c) the use of ODSM's centralised safe ministry database Safe Ministry Records Online (**SaMRO**) has increased slightly, and at the end of the reporting period 105 parishes were using it as well as 30 parishes from another diocese in regional NSW.

## Communication with Parishes

62. The ODSM continues to receive enquiries 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 enquiries per week and sometimes many more than this.
63. Inquiries about the requirements of the *Safe Ministry to Children Ordinance 2020* continued throughout the reporting period but this has reduced down now to one or two inquiries a month.
64. Frontline, a safe ministry podcast, is designed to be another channel of communication with churches and church workers. Mainly aimed at SMRs and ministry staff, Frontline allows for more detailed and nuanced presentation of material – especially for complex matters like the new Safe Ministry Check. For more information, please visit the [Safe Ministry website](#).
65. In late 2020 we started a ‘closed’ Facebook Group just for SMRs. It currently has 133 members and is another useful channel of information and discussion. In more than a few cases, it has acted as a ‘self-help’ group with more experienced SMR’s helping newer ones with advice and information.

## Timely and Caring Response to Those Affected by Abuse

### Archbishop’s Meetings with Survivors

66. Throughout the reporting period Archbishop Kanishka Raffel made himself available to meet with complainants, to listen to them and relate to them pastorally and provide an apology on behalf of the Diocese as appropriate. There was one of these meetings during the reporting period.
67. These meetings are of immense value in almost all cases and survivors are appreciative of the effort made by the Archbishop and the ODSM Chaplain to facilitate these apologies.

### Care of Survivors of Abuse and Complainants

68. It is the role of the ODSM 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 ODSM funds. A caring response is the first important step along the road to healing for survivors of abuse.

### Domestic Abuse

69. In 2018 Synod passed the Sydney Diocese’s *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Policy and Good Practice Guidelines*. That same year the Standing Committee established the Ministry Spouse Support Fund (**MSSF**). Over the reporting period there were payments made to two ministry spouses through the Fund. These women have each expressed their deep gratitude for the financial assistance and ongoing pastoral support.

### Hope and Healing Service

70. The Hope and Healing service is an annual service of lament, hope and healing for survivors of abuse during which the Archbishop offers an apology.
71. Two Hope and Healing services fell within the reporting period. One service was held at 7:00 pm on 4 July 2022 at St John’s Church Glebe and was attended by around 30 people, including at least 10 survivors of abuse. Due to inclement weather, we decided to schedule future services earlier in the year when the days are longer and warmer. The second service was held at 7:00 pm on 2 March 2023 at The Bridge Church, Kirribilli. Over 40 people attended the service, including more than 12 survivors of abuse. The Archbishop’s public apology was very well received by many of the survivors in attendance.

### Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme

72. 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 designed to be different to litigation, which can be a protracted and harrowing process for survivors. The Scheme includes a mechanism for external assessment if necessary.
73. There are two identical schemes, one for matters that fall largely within the responsibility of parishes and one for Care Leaver matters that are the responsibility of the Sydney Anglican Home Mission Society (**SAHMS**).
74. Between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023 there was one payment under the Diocesan scheme and six payments were funded under the SAHMS scheme.
75. 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 been incorporated into the Scheme.

### National Redress Scheme

76. 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. 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 which have opted into the Scheme.
77. The ODSM provides information, advice and support services to the Sydney Anglican National Redress Scheme Corporation, which is the entity through which the Diocese of Sydney has opted into the NRS as part of the National Anglican Participating Group.
78. For more information about the NRS visit <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/> or call **1800 737 377**.
79. For more information about the National Anglican Participating Group visit this [link](#).
80. Opting into the NRS does not preclude the operation of the Diocesan Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme which continues to operate as another 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

81. 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 [abusereport@safeministry.org.au](mailto:abusereport@safeministry.org.au)). Reports can also be submitted via the [Safe Ministry website](#). 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.
82. 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 ODSM is able to assist the complainant in reporting the matter to the Police.
83. There are seven Contact Persons servicing the Diocese. Five of them are spread across regions: Ms Jane Thomas (Illawarra), Ms Nicky Lock (Northern Beaches), Ms Rosemary Royer (Northern Suburbs), Mr Rob Carroll (Southern Suburbs) and Ms Sandy Morrison (Western Suburbs). Two of the Contact Persons, Ms Sarah Piper and Mr Richard Elms are not fixed to any one regional area.
84. The Contact Persons meet four times a year with the Director and Chaplain for training and coordination of their roles.

## Just Procedures to Deal with Respondents and Persons of Risk

85. When the ODSM 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 ODSM Contact Persons.

### *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017*

86. The *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 (the Ordinance)* commenced on 1 November 2017, replacing the Discipline Ordinance 2006. 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 Ordinance may include abuse against an adult or child, bullying, grooming, inappropriate pastoral conduct involving a child, failing to report a serious indictable offence, victimisation, and process failure, that is, failing to report, deal with or investigate sexual abuse or child abuse in circumstances where that is required by law or 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.
87. Where a complaint is received by the ODSM that includes an allegation of criminal behaviour, a report is made to the NSW Police, if the complainant has not already made a report.
88. The Director receives complaints against clergy and church workers of the Diocese and administers the complaints process under the Ordinance. Each matter usually involves a Contact Person taking an initial complaint, making a report and, if applicable, offering counselling to the alleged victim. The ODSM 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. Early or alternate resolution processes may be offered or required in certain cases, should it be considered suitable, such as in some matters involving allegations of bullying (subject to the requirements of the Ordinance).
89. 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 Ministry Standards Committee for review and recommendations. Unresolved matters can be referred to the Ministry Standards Board.
90. 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.
91. 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 the exercise of their 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

92. The Director received 16 new complaints under the Ordinance during the reporting period.
93. The Director and Assistant Director each made one complaint under the Ordinance in their own right under clause 9 during the reporting period.
94. The Ministry Standards Committee met 8 times and considered 28 matters in the reporting period.

95. One matter was referred to the Ministry Standards Board during the reporting period.

### The Ministry Standards Committee

96. There are five members of the Ministry 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.
97. This Committee meets as required and is currently scheduled to meet every second month.

### Adjudicator

98. One matter concerning an unpaid lay respondent was referred to an Adjudicator for determination during the reporting period.

### Dispute Resolution Consultant

99. Ms Elenne Ford, in her capacity as Dispute Resolution Consultant, assists to resolve disputes that have been referred to ODSM, and in appropriate cases, allegations of bullying-type conduct that have made their way to the ODSM. Elenne has developed some resources for the ODSM and is also considering what training and education needs are required in this important area.

### Parish Support Teams

100. Parish Support Teams (**PST**) (formerly 'Parish Recovery Teams') are generally available to assist parishes where allegations of abuse or misconduct by clergy or church workers have arisen. A PST works in a parish to deal with the complex pastoral issues that arise once these matters come to light. PSTs aid those members of the parish who are affected and work towards the healing of the parish as a whole.
101. Since 2007 Pastor Tim Dyer of John Mark Ministries has trained volunteers for our PSTs. There are currently 11 trained PST consultants.
102. There was one new PST deployed during the reporting period for a new matter.
103. The PST model is currently under review.

### Guidelines for parishes regarding persons of concern

104. Guidelines for parishes have been developed in circumstances where there is a person who has been convicted, accused, is reasonably suspected of or has admitted to child abuse or sexual offences (a person of concern). The guidelines require these situations to be reported to the ODSM. Steps are then taken by the Rector and the wardens to develop a Safety Plan in consultation with ODSM where the person of concern seeks to attend church, to ensure that safety considerations have been met and appropriate boundaries and supervision have been put in place.
105. For more information visit the [Safe Ministry Website](#).

### Cooperation with NSW Government Agencies and Other Churches

106. The Professional Standards Interdenominational Network (**PSIDN**) continues to provide a helpful forum to discuss common issues and topics relevant to safeguarding across Christian denominations in NSW and the ACT and provides valuable relationship building opportunities that facilitate cooperation across denominations. The Network includes ongoing attendance by representatives of NSW Police and the Office of the Children's Guardian (**OCG**). Highlights during the reporting period included attendance and a presentation by the newly appointed Children's Guardian for NSW, Mr Steve Kinmond OAM and regular engagement from the OCG on the Reportable Conduct Scheme and the Child Safe Scheme. Other presentations included: 'The Long and Winding Road 5 years on from the Royal Commission – where are we now?' from Dr Ursula Stephens, CEO of Australian

Catholic Safeguarding Limited, and 'An introduction to Restorative Justice and Investigations as part of an institutional response to complaints/allegations' from Mrs Robyn Bailey of ExploreSolutions.

107. The National Network of Directors of Professional Standards from Anglican Dioceses across Australia meets together each quarter. These meetings are mainly held online. 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.

## Royal Commission recommendations, Reportable Conduct Scheme and Child Safe Standards

108. The ODSM and SMB are continuing to monitor and implement several key Royal Commission Recommendations. Particular areas for ongoing consideration include age-appropriate protective behaviours training for children, professional supervision (or 'pastoral supervision') for pastoral ministry staff and ongoing professional development for pastoral ministry staff.
109. The NSW Government expanded the Reportable Conduct Scheme to include faith-based organisations from 1 March 2020 under the *Children's Guardian Act 2019*. The *Reportable Allegations and Convictions Ordinance 2022* was passed by Synod last year to clarify the application of the Reportable Conduct Scheme to the Diocese. The *Reportable Allegations and Convictions Ordinance 2022* makes it clear that the Archbishop is the Head of Entity for the Diocese and that allegations of reportable conduct should be reported to the Archbishop or his delegate – in this case, the ODSM.
110. Members of the clergy and church workers should ensure that they are both familiar and compliant with the reporting requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme in their practice of ministry and seek advice or clarification from the ODSM if they have any questions or inquiries about them or a particular situation in which they are uncertain whether the requirements apply. There has been a small but growing number of these matters that the ODSM dealt with since the introduction of the scheme.
111. The Child Safe Scheme has been incorporated into the *Children's Guardian Act 2019* and requires religious bodies to implement the Child Safe Standards. Work is continuing, at the direction of the SMB, to review current diocesan policy and practice in light of the Child Safe Standards and work developing a Diocesan Child Safe Policy is underway. Parishes are encouraged to consider how to implement the standards in their own context and to access resources referenced in Safe Ministry Training, linked on the [Safe Ministry Website](#), and produced by the [Office of the Children's Guardian](#). The standards are principle based and implementation will be unique to each organisation even within the broader policy structures of the Diocese.

On behalf of the Safe Ministry Board and the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry.

NICOLA WARWICK-MAYO  
Chair  
Safe Ministry Board

25 July 2023

LACHLAN BRYANT  
Director of Safe Ministry  
Office of the Director of Safe Ministry

25 July 2023