

# Professional Development for Ministry Workers

## 54/22 Ministry Wellbeing and Development

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

### Key Points

- Professional Development, which is sometimes called ministry development, is the intentional maintenance and enhancement of the knowledge, expertise, and competence of ministers throughout their ministry to faithfully minister to the glory of God's name and the benefit of His church.
- Implementing minimum expectations for Professional Development promotes the health and effectiveness of ministers, is in line with secular expectations of people who work closely with other people, and is consistent with the Diocese's necessary response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.
- It is proposed to require ministry workers to undertake –
  - 12 hours over a rolling 3 years – compulsory components,
  - 10 hours per year – variable self-directed components, and
  - A minimum of 6 hours per year – Pastoral Supervision.

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to propose a system of mandatory professional for all licensed clergy and authorised ministry workers in the Diocese who are in a substantially full-time parish ministry position (hereafter referred to as **ministry workers**).

### Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report 'Professional Development for Ministry Workers' –
  - (a) invite members of the Synod to provide feedback to the Diocesan Secretary by 31 December 2024 on the proposed arrangements for all ministry workers in the Diocese to undertake mandatory, regular Professional Development as contemplated in the report, and
  - (b) request the Standing Committee to implement arrangements for Professional Development for all ministry workers having given regard to any feedback received.

### Background

4. Recommendation 16.5 of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (**the Royal Commission**) 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. Synod passed Resolution 54/22 in the following terms –
- ‘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, and
- (d) requests the Standing Committee to establish a committee with a gender balance and appropriate expertise –
- (i) to develop proposals for a system of mandatory professional development 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
- (ii) to report to the 1st ordinary session of the 53rd Synod.’
6. At its meeting in November 2022, the Standing Committee resolved to form the committee requested by paragraph (d) of Synod resolution 54/22 as follows –
- ‘Standing Committee appoints a committee comprising Mrs Kirsty Bucknell, Mrs Stacey Chapman, Bishop Chris Edwards, the Rev Mike Hastie, the Rev Dr Andrew Katay, Ms Vikki Napier, the Rev Gary O’Brien, the Principal of Moore Theological College or his delegate, a female member of the clergy to be co-opted by the committee in consultation with the Archdeacon for Women’s Ministry, and Miss Caroline Spencer (chair to be elected from amongst the members), subject to their consent, to –
- (i) develop proposals for a system of mandatory professional development 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
- (ii) report to the Standing Committee, in time for it to report to the first ordinary session of the 53rd Synod,
- as per Synod Resolution 54/22.’
7. The Committee met five times from October 2023 to April 2024. The Principal of Moore Theological College nominated the Rev Jason Veitch as his delegate. The Archdeacon for Women’s Ministry nominated the Rev Lauren Mahaffey to the Committee. The Committee also invited the Rev Belinda Burn, Chaplain (Office of the Director of Safe Ministry), to its meetings.

8. The Committee's Terms of Reference were limited to 'stipendiary or paid' church workers; however, the Committee considered ministry workers not covered by this definition should also be able to participate on a voluntary basis.

## Discussion

### Professional Development in a ministry context

#### *What is Professional Development?*

9. "Professional Development" is the term which was applied to ministers in the recommendations of the Royal Commission which points to the ongoing development of ministry workers. The term Professional Development is widely used and recognised in the community, and Professional Development is expected of people working in many professions.
10. The General Synod Safe Ministry Commission (**GSSMC**) defines Professional Development as –
- 'Professional Development, which is sometimes called ministry development, means the maintenance and enhancement of the knowledge, expertise, and competence of ministers throughout their vocation, according to a plan which has been developed with regard to the needs of the minister, the church and society'.
11. Using this definition as a starting point, the Committee refined it further by –
- (a) omitting the reference to "according to a plan...", as this relates to *how* Professional Development is undertaken rather than *what* it is,
  - (b) changing the word 'vocation' to 'ministry',
  - (c) including the word 'intentional', and
  - (d) articulating a desired outcome for undertaking Professional Development and why this is important, using words from the Ordinal (the service for The Ordering of Priests, *An Australian Prayer Book*).
12. The Committee also discussed whether the definition should include the word 'theological', given all we do in ministry ought to be theologically based, but noted that the intent of Professional Development is to enhance skills rather than character and conviction and ultimately decided not to use the word.
13. Following this discussion, the Committee agreed to adopt the following definition –
- 'Professional Development, which is sometimes called ministry development, means the intentional maintenance and enhancement of the knowledge, expertise, and competence of ministers throughout their ministry to "faithfully minister to the glory of God's name and the benefit of His church".'

#### *Principles of Professional Development*

14. Professional Development in a ministry context is underpinned by the following principles. It is –
- (a) Consistent with the Scriptures (e.g., 1 Tim 4:16 NIV - Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.)
  - (b) Designed to help the minister and the ministry. This includes an interplay between character, convictions and competencies.
  - (c) Planned. A minister should create a minister's development plan for the year, and annually review their development and progress in the ministry. Learning should be recorded in writing.
  - (d) Accountable. A minister's progress should be discussed with a suitable person, such as a mentor, ministry peer or Pastoral Supervisor.
  - (e) Self-directed. The minister should take ownership of creating the content of their own minister's development plan, in discussion with others.

##### *Benefits of Professional Development*

15. This proposal is designed to encourage ministers to set aside time to develop both themselves as the minister and the ministries they lead in an intentional way using a minister's development plan. Its goal is to promote health and vitality in ministers and the congregations they serve.
16. Implementation of minimum expectations for Professional Development amongst ministers is in line with secular expectations of people who work closely with other people (for example, teachers, nurses and psychologists) and therefore potentially reduces barriers raised against gospel ministry. Further, the content of the compulsory components of Professional Development is consistent with our necessary response to the Royal Commission and reflects the godly desire to be 'above reproach' in these matters moving forward.
17. It is acknowledged that many ministers currently do in excess of 20 hours a year of Professional Development (or ministry development). It is hoped that other ministers who have not been able to invest in their development, for a variety of reasons, will benefit from this minimal mandatory framework.
18. While this proposal provides for compulsory components, there is significant scope for variable components. This is because ministers serve in many different contexts (social, demographic and economic), have different responsibilities (different congregations, people groups and ministry portfolios), and have different gifts and skills.

##### Existing Professional Development practices in the Diocese

##### *Required Professional Development*

19. In reviewing the existing mandatory Professional Development practises in the Diocese, it was noted –
  - (a) the Professional Development already required for the core role for ministry workers is not onerous. It includes –
    - (i) Ongoing familiarity and compliance with the Diocesan Faithfulness in Service Code of Conduct for ministry workers,
    - (ii) Attendance of Faithfulness in Service Conference (6 hours every 3 years),
    - (iii) Safe Ministry compliance (3 hours every 3 years),
    - (iv) Pastoral Supervision (currently rolling out with a required minimum of six one-hour supervision sessions per annum), and
    - (v) Engagement in the Diocesan mandated framework for Performance Appraisals (as it applies in a particular worker's role; yet to be rolled out),
  - (b) compliance with many of these elements (listed above) is required in order to hold a licence or authority in the Diocese, and
  - (c) a proportion of ministry workers already have additional mandatory training and development requirements associated with their governance roles by virtue of their positions on various diocesan boards and councils.
20. Whilst many ministry workers are voluntarily engaging in a range of additional Professional Development opportunities, there are some ministry workers that find little opportunity for further development given the demands of their particular roles.

##### *Lifelong Ministry Development*

21. The Diocese has an existing tool for ministers undertaking Professional Development – Lifelong Ministry Development (**LMD**) administered by Ministry Training and Development.
22. In December 2023, the Committee conducted an online survey of those who subscribed to LMD including both those who used this tool and those who subscribed but did not use it. 133 people provided feedback. The survey found –
  - (a) LMD guides users through an annual cycle, integrating Professional Development with an annual review (including a performance appraisal) and peer consultation.

- (b) LMD is integrated into the three year Ministry Development (**MD**) program for new assistant ministers. However, most people don't continue to use it when they have finished the MD program (i.e. once it is no longer required to complete the course).
- (c) Respondents saw the value in having a planned approach to ministry development.
- (d) The web based system is fit for purpose. Nonetheless, some users reported that they found its functionality cumbersome. If LMD was mandated as *the* recording tool for use in the Diocese, it would require substantial upgrades and redesign, including, for instance, an app version.
- (e) There are many other tools and platforms which people may prefer to use in recording Professional Development, including manual records. Rather than try to integrate LMD with other platforms (which would be expensive), participants could be allowed to choose their own recording method(s), and LMD simply be one of the available options.
- (f) The principles in the design of LMD are adequate and it is possible to build on the work already done. The key principles are –
  - (i) Conducting an annual review of how the minister and ministry is going (this could incorporate a “performance appraisal”).
  - (ii) Creating some ‘focus areas’ for development for the year ahead, these can relate to both the minister and ministry.
  - (iii) Defining the ‘outcomes’ that are anticipated for each focus area.
  - (iv) Outlining what ‘activities’ will help achieve these outcomes.
  - (v) Recording the learning of each development activity to bring clarity.
  - (vi) Discussing the progress of the ministry development with a trusted person like a Pastoral Supervisor or mentor to provide encouragement and accountability.

**Proposed system of Professional Development**

- 23. It is recommended that ministry workers be required to undertake a minimum of 60 hours of Professional Development over a three year cycle, comprising –
  - (a) 12 hours over a rolling 3 years – compulsory components
  - (b) 10 hours per year – variable self-directed components, and
  - (c) a minimum of 6 hours per year – Pastoral Supervision.

Minimum 60 hours Professional Development over each 3 year cycle		
12 hours	48 hours	
Compulsory components 12 hours / 3 years	Variable components 10 hours / year	Pastoral supervision Min. 6 hours / year
Addressing each of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional responsibility and boundaries</li> <li>• Ethics in ministry</li> <li>• Child safety</li> <li>• Domestic and family violence</li> </ul>	Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conferences, seminars, workshops</li> <li>• Web-based courses</li> <li>• Further academic study</li> <li>• Professional reading/ listening/ viewing</li> <li>• Committee/taskforce work</li> <li>• Other professional development</li> </ul>	Refer to the Pastoral Supervision Policy, which requires a minimum of six one-hour supervision sessions per annum

*Compulsory Professional Development components*

- 24. The Royal Commission recommended that the Professional Development undertaken by ministry workers include three compulsory components – professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry, and child safety.
- 25. The GSSMC further recommended an additional compulsory component in recognising and responding to Domestic and Family Violence. The GSSMC also recommends that a minimum of

three hours per triennium be spent on each of the four compulsory components (i.e., a total of 12 hours).

26. The suite of Safe Ministry requirements in the Diocese are sufficient to address the four compulsory components. This includes the Faithfulness in Ministry conference (one day each triennium), Safe Ministry Training (three to six hours Introductory/ Refresher courses), and the Know Domestic Abuse course (four to five hours). Regional Conferences and Mission Area meetings may also address these components.
27. Professional Development on the compulsory components undertaken in other contexts and by other providers should also be recognised towards the total hours. This can best be achieved by leaving it to the judgement of the participants rather than maintaining a list of approved/accredited courses.
28. It is proposed to require 12 hours over a rolling three years in the four compulsory components recommended by the GSSMC. This means that participants would be required to declare they have progressed towards the three-yearly total on an annual basis.

*Variable Professional Development components*

29. What people do for the variable component of Professional Development cannot and should not be mandated; however, it can be scaffolded by suggested categories/competencies that assist people in considering what type of Professional Development to undertake. These should be identified in a Minister's Development Plan at the outset of each year.
30. To that end, it is suggested that the variable components of Professional Development might cover development activities focused on –
  - (a) character,
  - (b) conviction, and/ or
  - (c) competency (see below),
 including theological engagement with each area.
31. Suggested competencies include –

<b>Suggested Self-identified Competency Focus Areas</b>	<b>Possible training areas related to this competency</b>
<b>Leadership</b> incl. deciding on and initiating a course of action, leading others to achieve an outcome, supervising others' actions, fostering spiritual growth within the ministry	Coaching, delegation, two-way communication, giving constructive feedback, recruitment, change management
<b>Relating and Pastoring</b> incl. building relationships within and beyond the ministry, caring for others and engaging them with the gospel	Interpersonal skills, conflict management, teamwork, dealing with difficult people, caring for those with mental health needs
<b>Preaching and Teaching</b> incl. interpreting the Bible, presenting the Bible faithfully, considering audience, persuading and influencing others, equipping others for growth	Preaching, intercultural understanding, evangelism
<b>Creating and Strategising</b> incl. considering matters from a variety of perspectives, developing options, formulating vision and strategy	Strategic planning
<b>Planning and Delivering</b> incl. planning, managing time, delivering on plans, achieving objectives	Time management, project management, SMART goal setting, governance, risk management
<b>Coping and growing</b> incl. adapting to change, coping with stressors and demands, developing diverse skills	Wellbeing, resilience, emotional regulation, transition management, trauma intervention, self-care

32. The GSSMC highlights the need for a 'mixed methods' approach to Professional Development activities that utilise a variety of learning contexts to meet a range of learning styles and needs. Aligning to the Minister's Development Plan, activities might consist of:
- (a) attendance at seminars, workshops, or conferences,
  - (b) participation in web-based programs,
  - (c) reading, listening, or viewing,
  - (d) researching and writing a book or article for publication in a ministry journal,
  - (e) teaching other ministers in an academic institution, conference, or course,
  - (f) undertaking further academic studies in a relevant discipline, or
  - (g) serving on a committee, working group, or governing body of a Diocesan or ministry-related organisation.
33. It is recommended that variable component activities in any year be comprised of at least two of these development methods.

#### *Recording and reflecting*

34. A written reflection should be required for each hour of development activity. Based on the findings about the existing LMD tool, it is not proposed to prescribe a particular method or platform for recording a person's Professional Development.
35. Participants should discuss the learning gained from development activities with their pastoral supervisor or other suitable person (such as a coach, mentor, rector, etc.)
36. The Professional Development Resources provided in the GSSMC's Ministry Wellbeing and Development report, including templates for a Professional Development Plan and recording of Professional Development (see 3.27), as well as guides to the creation of a Professional Development Plan, and a written reflection (see 3.28).

#### Compliance and reporting

37. It is proposed that participants be required to declare annually the following –
- 'This year I –
- created an annual Minister's Development Plan (**MDP**),
  - recorded my learning and a written reflection for each hour of activity,
  - discussed my learning with a pastoral supervisor (or other suitable person),
  - completed at least one hour accruing to towards completion of 12 hours over a rolling three years of Professional Development addressing the compulsory components (i.e., professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry, child safety, and domestic and family violence), accruing towards completion of 12 hours over a rolling three years, and
  - completed a minimum of 16 hours per year of Professional Development (including a minimum of six hours of Pastoral Supervision and 10 hours of variable components from my MDP).'
38. Such a declaration could be made online via the Registry Portal. This could be the same place where ministry workers will be required to report their compliance with Pastoral Supervision requirements.
39. It is not recommended that participants' Professional Development be randomly audited, as is the case in other professions.

#### Other matters

40. Additional work will be required to determine the implementation of mandatory Professional Development in the Diocese, particularly –
- (a) the timing of the implementation,
  - (b) whether the implementation should be staged,

- (c) the communication and education that will be required,
  - (d) whether and how Professional Development should be legislated in the Diocese.
41. These matters will be considered following feedback from Synod members on the system of mandatory Professional Development outlined above.
42. Standing Committee has established a separate committee to –
- (a) provide recommendations to the Standing Committee about how implementation of Pastoral Supervision, Performance Appraisals, and Professional Development may be coordinated,
  - (b) consider a holistic consideration of the whole suite of expectations on ministry workers' time with regard to training, support and development to determine if there are redundancies that can be eliminated to make up for the added time imposition of pastoral supervision, including but not limited to Mission Areas and a consideration of the whether assistant ministers in the Ministry Training and Development program should be excluded from pastoral supervision requirements for that period.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS  
**Diocesan Secretary**

20 May 2024