

# Extract of the 2023 Resolutions of the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney

## **9/23 Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017**

Synod, noting that the *Ministry Standards Ordinance 2017 (MSO)* has been in operation for five years, asks Standing Committee to investigate –

- (a) the impact of the complaints processes of the Office of the Director of Safe Ministry (**ODSM**) under the MSO on church workers, their families, and their parish ministry, including duration of complaints handling, impact of confidentiality requirements, perceptions of the investigation process, and general confidence in the process,
- (b) the adequacy of support arrangements for complainants and respondents involved in ODSM processes,
- (c) the cost of processing complaints that ultimately do not proceed, or return no finding of unfitness, and how those costs can be minimised,
- (d) what steps can be taken to minimise negative impacts on church workers and their families that result from false, trivial or vexatious complaints,
- (e) whether the shift to a fitness for office test has achieved the intended objectives, what costs it has involved, and whether it should be maintained,
- (f) whether complaints of child sexual abuse and bullying are best governed by a common process and/or ordinance, or whether these complaints require different approaches, processes and/or ordinances,
- (g) the extent to which the biblical necessity for church discipline and the practical requirements of such church discipline are properly considered in our approach to, and definitions of, bullying and harassment, and
- (h) how we can make better use of the Diocesan policy for dealing with allegations of unacceptable behaviour and other processes in resolving conflict apart from the MSO,

and report its findings and recommendations to the 2024 session of Synod.