

## Safe Ministry Board and Professional Standards Unit Annual Report 2013-2014

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

### Introduction

1. This report is provided under the *Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001 (cl 17)* and the *Discipline Ordinance 2006 (cl 104)* for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 (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 a Code of Conduct called *Faithfulness in Service*;
  - (c) to provide regular and comprehensive training and support of all clergy and church workers;
  - (d) to make a timely and caring response to all who are affected by abuse; and
  - (e) to enact just procedures to deal with respondents and persons of risk.

### Safe Ministry Board

3. The Safe Ministry Board (SMB) was established under the *Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001*. The SMB is tasked with ensuring that safe ministry, child protection and child abuse issues are properly dealt with throughout the Diocese. This includes development and review of practices and policies in these areas. The functions of the Board are defined in clauses 5 and 6 of the Ordinance.
4. The members of the Safe Ministry Board (SMB) over the reporting period were: the Rev Dr Keith Condie (Chair), Mrs Sarah Clancy, Ms Stephanie Cole, the Rev David Coy, the Rev Steven Layson, the Rev Chris Moroney, Deaconess Pattie Mutton (resigned June 2014), the Rev Janine Steele, Dr Ruth Shatford AM, Mrs Kylie Williams, the Rev David Mears and Dr Tim Channon.
5. The SMB has met 9 times in the reporting period.

### Professional Standards Unit

6. Neil Atwood joined the PSU team on 1 March 2014 (working 2 days a week) in the newly created position of Safe Ministry Representative Liaison Officer.
7. Kerrie Newmarch continues to serve as Case Manager, Pastoral Care and Support (also referred to as PSU Chaplain), Annelie Singh as Personal Assistant and the Unit's Administrator and Lachlan Bryant as Director.
8. In practice much of the work of the PSU derives from the Safe Ministry Board, which has the overall responsibility to encourage all parishes and other units of the Diocese to be child protection aware, compliant and responsive.
9. The Director has overall responsibility for the PSU and is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the complaints and discipline procedure for clergy and church workers (*Discipline Ordinance 2006*) and the National Register (*National Register Canon 2007 Adopting Ordinance 2008*).
10. When the PSU receives a complaint alleging abuse by a member of the clergy or church worker, the Chaplain follows up and provides a caring response to complainants and victims of abuse. The Chaplain provides pastoral support and coordinates the provision of counselling in each case. The Chaplain works closely with the PSU Contact Persons.
11. The PSU undertakes screening of all clergy appointments on behalf of the Archbishop. The screening includes a Working With Children Check through the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) (formerly known as the NSW Commission for Children and Young People) and a National Register check. The PSU provides ongoing support and advice to office holders, parishes and organisations in this regard.
12. Anglicare's Case Manager for Pastoral Care and Assistance for Care Leavers provides a pastoral and caring response to former residents of the Church of England Homes and Sydney Anglican Mission Society Homes, who have complained of abuse or mistreatment during their time at the Homes. Michelle Knight commenced in this role in June 2012 and works from Anglicare's Parramatta offices, with the Rev Dr Andrew Ford, Director of Pastoral Care and Theology.

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

13. This is the subject of a separate report to the Synod. Only limited information will be provided in this Report.
14. The Royal Commission commenced in 2013 with a stated minimum duration of 3 years. The Royal Commission has been charged with examining the sexual abuse of children in the context of institutions throughout Australia including churches and their agencies.
15. The Royal Commission presents an important opportunity for the Diocese to review both past and current practices from a 'best practice' perspective.
16. A Steering Committee was appointed by Standing Committee in December 2012 to oversee the response of the Diocese to the Royal Commission and to provide the Director of the PSU with a point of reference for undertaking this work.
17. Additional funding for resources to respond to the Royal Commission has been allocated which is being administered by the Steering Committee.
18. PSU files relevant to the Royal Commission and PSU policies are being comprehensively reviewed as part of the preparations for the Royal Commission and significant work is required as a result. Professor Patrick Parkinson has been assisting with the policy review work.
19. The PSU is therefore under increased pressure to keep up to date with existing work whilst carefully managing the work required in response to the Royal Commission.
20. The Royal Commission released its Interim Report on 30 June 2014. In the Interim Report, the Royal Commission confirmed that –
- (a) it will require a further 2 years (until the end of 2017) to complete its work;
  - (b) at this stage it is too early for the Royal Commission to make any substantial recommendations;
  - (c) only 70 public hearings will be able to be completed within the time it has allowed;
  - (d) of the 13 public hearings held to date themes include repeated abuse, multiple perpetrators, barriers to reporting abuse and adults that have systematically failed to protect children;
  - (e) of the cases reported to the Commission so far –
    - 90% of perpetrators were male;
    - on average it took 22 years for victims to report abuse, with men taking longer than women;
    - on average female victims were 9 years old when they were abused;
    - on average male victims were 10 years old when they were abused.

### **Review of the Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001**

21. The SMB considered the *Safe Ministry Ordinance 2001* during the reporting period and formed the view that that some parts of the Ordinance have either never been used or have become outdated. The Ordinance has been referred to the Standing Committee for review.

### **Website**

22. The safe ministry website [www.psu.anglican.asn.au](http://www.psu.anglican.asn.au) provides access to all current policies and documents related to safe ministry, child protection and professional standards. The website provides links to other important online resources such as the New Working with Children Check, the NSW Department of Family and Community Services webpage, counselling services, contact information for other dioceses and other denominations.

23. Since the website was established in 2006, it has become somewhat dated. Work on a new PSU website and safe ministry logo is underway. It is envisioned that this website would be easy to navigate, have easy to find, simplified safe ministry documents and other resources, a special section for Safe Ministry Representatives (SMRs) with resources, (including resources shared by SMRs themselves), and perhaps a non-public forum for SMRs.

### **Archbishop's Meetings with Survivors**

24. Throughout the reporting period the Archbishop has continued to make himself available to listen to complainants and relate to them pastorally. This usually includes the making of an appropriate apology on behalf of the Church.

25. These meetings are of immense value in almost all cases and survivors are appreciative of the effort taken by the Archbishop and the PSU Chaplain to arrange them.

### Screening of Lay Workers

26. All paid lay church workers in the Diocese are required to apply for the Archbishop's licence. This involves completing a comprehensive screening and disclosure questionnaire with the applicable Regional Bishop or his representative.

27. All workers in 'child-related' employment (including licensed ministers and unpaid volunteers) must undertake working with children checks (see below for more information). In addition, it is recommended that parishes seek full disclosure of any relevant history and fully complete reference checks with prior supervisors or employers.

28. The 'prohibited persons' terminology in NSW child protection legislation was removed with the commencement of the new Working with Children Check (WWCC) on 15 June 2013. Now 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 councillors or parish nominators.

### The New Working With Children Check

29. The phasing in of the New Working With Children Check (WWCC) began on 15 June 2013.

30. Some important developments with the new check include: clearances must be obtained by both paid employees and volunteers in child-related work; the clearance will remain valid for 5 years; regular crosschecking with NSW police records will be undertaken; any matters of concern will result in the OCG imposing a bar; and the same clearance may be used for multiple employers.

31. All parishes should have now registered for the new WWCC.

32. The new WWCC requires –

- (a) all new persons employed after 15 June 2013 who will be in 'child-related' work (which includes licensed ministers in our context) to obtain a WWCC clearance, which must be verified by the parish (or organisation) where they are working;
- (b) all existing clergy (whether in a parish or not) and any lay workers (paid or unpaid) on the staff ministry team to obtain a clearance (the Registry and the parish are both required to verify clearances of those with the Archbishop's license) – the deadline for this was 31 March 2014 (after being extended from 31 December 2013);
- (c) all other persons who are in 'child-related' work in parishes (or organisations), new and existing, employed and voluntary, to obtain a clearance in the period 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2015 (after being extended from 31 December 2014), and parishes (or the applicable organisation) must verify those clearances.

33. Some exemptions to the new WWCC apply. In many cases careful thought is required before an exemption is relied upon. Penalties apply for non-compliance with the requirements of the new check.

34. There were 966 ministers in the Diocese who completed the WWCC before 31 March 2014 and 45 Ministers who were considered exempt due to serious health issues (e.g., being legally blind, frail, infirm or having dementia) or residing interstate.

35. The PSU is assisting parishes for implementation of the new WWCC and those with responsibility for these matters are encouraged to contact us as needed. More information about the new WWCC may be found by contacting Neil Atwood ([nta@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:nta@sydney.anglican.asn.au)) or viewing the safe ministry website (<http://www.sydneyanglicansafeministry.com.au>) or the OCG WWCC website:

(<http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/working-with-children-check>)

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

36. All candidates for ordination by the Archbishop continue to be required to complete a comprehensive screening and disclosure questionnaire. This is administered by Ministry Training and Development (MT&D).

37. Ordination/ministry candidates also continue to undergo extensive assessment and screening by way of reference-checking, general psychological testing, interviews, chaplaincy supervision reports and Moore College reports. A PSU record check and National Register check are also undertaken. The *Discipline Ordinance 2006* provides a mechanism for pre-ordination disclosure and consideration of prior sexual misconduct or abuse.

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

38. The Diocese is a member of the National Council of Churches' Safe Church Training Agreement. There are currently 38 independent churches and other dioceses who are members of the Safe Church Training Agreement across Australia.

39. The *Safe Ministry Essentials* course remains the mandated safe ministry training for the Diocese. Recently, some gaps have been identified in the content and coverage of the course and this is currently being reviewed by the SMB – in particular the important matter of protecting vulnerable adults which is currently outside the scope of the training.

40. Over the reporting period the SMB convened a subcommittee to work towards expanding the coverage of Safe Ministry Training to include "vulnerable adults," in order for the training to no longer have almost an exclusive focus on ministry to children. This is a very important and positive step towards a more holistic approach to safe ministry in parishes across the Diocese.

41. Youthworks continues to update the *Safe Ministry Essentials* course materials and facilitates the delivery of the training across the Diocese. Over the past four years the level of funding received by Youthworks for Safe Ministry has remained static, although the costs administering and resourcing this training have increased over time. Commencing March 2013 charging was implemented to help cover the costs for Youthworks to continue to deliver the training. These charges are below the actual costs to maintain and administer the Safe Ministry training. For an explanation of these costs go to: [http://www.youthworks.net/safeministry/available\\_safe\\_ministry\\_training](http://www.youthworks.net/safeministry/available_safe_ministry_training).

42. A Video to assist in the provision of the training that was produced in 2013 to replace the *Behind Closed Doors* video has started to be used in Safe Ministry Training.

43. The SMB and PSU are thankful to Youthworks for their efforts in safe ministry training.

### Training of Ministry/Ordination Candidates and Clergy

44. Eight Safe Ministry Modules have been developed and are being taught through Moore College, Ministry Training and Development, and Youthworks College as part of their courses and programs.

45. Following the change to the *Parish Administration Ordinance* in 2013 requiring ministers in the Diocese to complete Safe Ministry Training once every three years, it was decided to include this training as part of the Diocesan triennial Faithfulness in Service Seminars. This allowed those ministers and licensed church workers who came to the Faithfulness in Service Seminars to fulfil all safe ministry training requirements for the next three years by attending the one day. Furthermore, it was decided to roll-out (albeit in a compressed fashion) an early version of the newly developed Safe Ministry Training that has been expanded to incorporate 'vulnerable persons', rather than just focusing on children.

46. The Faithfulness in Service Seminars were held in four locations across the Diocese during the first week in June 2014 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm each day. The seminars were promoted with the theme of 'Walk in the Light', derived from Ephesians 5:1-20, the passage preached on by Archbishop Glenn Davies at the start of each seminar. Youthworks trainers, the Rev Jon Thorpe and Mrs Kylie Williams, presented Safe Ministry Training on Vulnerable People ably assisted by our Diocesan Contact Persons. Other topics included 'Using Electronic Communications Wisely in Ministry' from the Rev Nigel Fortescue, and for the afternoon session on pornography, hurt and renewal: Dr Bill Struthers, Professor of Psychology at Wheaton College, Illinois and Jason and Laura Huxley from the organisation Guilty Pleasure based in Melbourne.

47. Attendances at each of the sessions was as follows –

Date	Venue	Attendees
2 June	Dapto	214
3 June	Ryde	295
5 June	Rooty Hill	270
6 June	Annandale	266
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1045</b>

48. A DVD with the input presented on the day including the Safe Ministry module on Vulnerable People has been requested by 30 people who received an exemption prior to the Conferences being presented. These DVDs will be sent out in due course.

49. We have received 348 completed feedback surveys from participants to date. Generally the seminars appear to have been well-received by participants although numerous suggestions for how the

seminars can be improved further were also received. A 6-page article on the afternoon session concerning pornography appeared in the July edition of *Southern Cross*. In response to the feedback received we are working on making the sessions or part of them more widely available to interested persons in our parishes.

### Safe Ministry Representatives

50. The role of SMRs in parishes continues to be pivotal in ensuring parishes comply with safe ministry requirements.

51. The PSU issues a Safe Ministry folder to each SMR and each rector. The PSU provides support and assistance to SMRs by telephone and email. There continues to be a significant level of direct enquiry from parishes and support given to them. It was anticipated that this would increase due to the New Working With Children Check being phased in from 15 June 2013. Slightly more than a year later we can confirm that this has certainly been our experience.

52. The existence and importance of SMRs was underlined when the Commission for Children and Young People confirmed in late 2012 that they were undertaking an audit of religious institutions in NSW concerning compliance with the Working With Children Check. This year the Office of the Children's Guardian indicated that auditing for compliance with the new WWCC has now commenced.

53. Since 2008 it has been mandatory for each parish to nominate an SMR, although it appears there have been varying degrees of compliance with this requirement since that time. From January 2013 a position description for SMRs was provided with the Registry's January mail out with the forms for the annual returns for parishes. In 2013 SMR training was also offered and promoted for the first time since 2008.

54. During the previous reporting period, a total of 207 parishes (out of 269) had nominated a SMR to the Registry. This was noted to be an increase of 7% since the previous reporting period the year before.

55. As at time of writing, 236 parishes have provided current SMR details to the Registry. That leaves 35 parishes (out of 271) as not having an SMR according to the Registry. However, the real number is probably closer to 15-20 as our inquiries show that a number of these churches have functioning SMRs, but have not returned the paperwork with AGM papers to the Registry.

56. Since the appointment of our SMR Liaison Officer Neil Atwood on 1 March 2014 –

- (a) all listed SMRs have been contacted by email or letter (this occurred within three weeks of their appointment);
- (b) there has been further one-on-one contact by phone and email with approximately 85-100 SMRs;
- (c) regular emails to SMRs with information and updates are being planned (approximately on an eight week cycle);
- (d) one parish has been audited (at the request of that parish) for safe ministry record keeping and policy development.

57. Also being arranged are –

- (a) two further parish audits/consultations for safe ministry in the third quarter of 2014;
- (b) a training/resourcing meeting for SMRs in the Wollongong region on 16 August 2014, and one each for the Northern and Western Regions in September and October (dates yet to be finalised). The goal is to hold meetings in every region before the end of the year, and to plan more for early 2015.

58. Preliminary indications suggest that compliance with the WWCC for clergy and licensed workers has been fairly high. From a survey of SMRs with a good sample size, 85% of parishes confirmed that their clergy and licensed lay workers have had their clearance verified.

59. Despite having until 31 March 2015 to comply, it appears that there has been a high level of compliance with the WWCC for volunteers. Only 10% of parishes had not started processing, and nearly 45% indicated that they had achieved 50-100% compliance for their volunteers as at mid-July 2014.

60. At this stage, key messages for parishes are –

- (a) parishes must verify the clearances of SRE teachers that they have “employed” or authorized;
- (b) do not delay getting volunteers registered and verified through the WWCC – we do not want a last minute rush;

- (c) work with your SMR to develop local policies to effectively apply safe ministry principles to your ministries;
- (d) keep your safe ministry records up to date to help keep volunteers up to date with their training.

61. More broad based audits of parishes are planned to check for compliance with safe ministry obligations, especially as the end of the volunteer registration window draws closer.

62. We are very thankful for the SMB and Archbishop Glenn Davies for their vision and for the Standing Committee's funding of the SMR Liaison Officer role and the vitally important work that is now being done as a result. Further important work is now being done, looking at for example whether online training for SMRs is able to be developed or whether a central record keeping database for child-related employees across the Diocese is possible.

#### **The Taskforce on Resisting Pornography**

63. The Taskforce on Resisting Pornography was established by the PSU in early 2013.

64. Members of the Taskforce include: Mr Lachlan Bryant (PSU Director), the Rev Kerrie Newmarch (PSU Chaplain), the Rev Dr Keith Condie (Dean of Students Moore Theological College), the Rev Chris Moroney (MT&D), Dr Patricia Weerakoon (sexologist), Mrs Nicky Lock (counsellor and Diocesan Contact Person), the Rev Marshall Ballantine-Jones (Youthworks), Mr Greg Powell (psychologist), the Rev Dr Grenville Kent (Wesley Institute) and the Rev Patrick Jones (youth minister, Castle Hill).

65. Although its work is only in its initial stages the Taskforce will be looking at the impact pornography has on the church and what can be done about this. A particular need that has already been identified is for better education for those in our churches on this topic.

66. The Taskforce commissioned a survey of ministers, chaplains and licensed lay church workers across the Diocese concerning attitudes to pornography use among other related matters. The results are being collated. An important step in beginning to address or respond to this issue was the almost exclusive focus on this topic in the afternoon sessions at each of the 2014 Faithfulness in Service Seminars.

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

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

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

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

#### **Tears and Hope Service**

69. Tears and Hope is a church service held each year for survivors of abuse. This is hosted by Ed Vaughan (minister, St John's Darlinghurst) and Kerrie Newmarch (chaplain PSU). In 2013 it was held on 25 November.

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

70. 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 church workers. The Scheme is an alternative to litigation which can be a protracted and harrowing process for survivors. The Scheme includes a mechanism for external assessment if necessary.

71. Currently there are two identical schemes, one for matters that fall within the Diocesan responsibility and one for Care Leavers matters that are the responsibility of Anglicare.

72. In March 2013 the Standing Committee and Anglicare Council each respectively approved an increase in the total maximum amount payable under the applicable Scheme to \$100,000. This was due to a number of factors including the concern that the amounts in the schedule to the Scheme had not been reviewed since the Schemes were created.

73. Between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2014 there were 7 payments under the Diocesan scheme and 7 payments were funded under the Anglicare scheme. In this period Anglicare also settled a number (8) of litigation matters brought by Care Leavers.

### **Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Complaints Protocol**

74. Since 1996 the Diocese has used an established protocol for receiving complaints and allegations of child abuse or sexual misconduct by clergy or church workers. All Contact Persons are trained counsellors who may be contacted through an abuse report line (1800 774 945 or [reportabuse@sydney.anglican.asn.au](mailto:reportabuse@sydney.anglican.asn.au)). 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.

75. Any complainant identifying possible criminal behaviour is encouraged to make a report to the NSW Police. The Contact Person or another appropriate person from the PSU is able to assist the person in reporting the matter to the Police.

76. The five Contact Persons are Margaret Fuller (Illawarra), Nicky Lock (Northern Beaches), Sue Kreicers (Northern Suburbs), Richard Elms (Western Suburbs) and Rob Carroll (Southern Suburbs).

77. The Contact Persons meet four times a year with the Director and Chaplain for training and coordination of their roles.

### **Discipline Ordinance**

78. The process for complaints regarding misconduct or child abuse by clergy or church workers is governed by the *Discipline Ordinance 2006*. The specific offences covered in the Ordinance are: child abuse, sexual abuse, unchastity, drunkenness, neglect of ministerial duty, non-payment of just debts, disgraceful conduct, conviction of a serious criminal offence and failure to report suspected child abuse.

79. Where a complaint is received by the PSU that includes an allegation of criminal behaviour a report is made to the NSW Police if the complainant is not able to make that report.

80. Complaints are transcribed and put to the respondent (the person who is the subject of the complaint). If the respondent denies the complaint or does not admit to the substance of the complaint, the matter is investigated under the direction of the Director of the PSU. The complaint, investigation report and responses are then presented to the Professional Standards Committee for review. Where necessary, the complaint may be referred to a Tribunal and recommendations made to the Archbishop for action. For laypersons, the strongest sanction available is a prohibition order that prevents a respondent from engaging in ministry or being appointed to any role in the church. A member of the clergy may be deposed from Holy Orders. There are also conciliation provisions, lesser sanctions and other recommendations available in appropriate circumstances. The Archbishop or relevant church authority (in the case of an unlicensed 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.

### **Assistance for Respondents**

81. Respondents are offered a Support Person to help pastorally care for and look after them while they are going through the Discipline Ordinance process. After a respondent has been served with a complaint under the *Discipline Ordinance 2006*, they may choose to seek legal advice concerning the matter. The cost of this legal advice is reimbursed by the PSU up to a pre-approved amount.

### **Complaints**

82. The Director received 7 new complaints under the Discipline Ordinance during the reporting period.

83. The Professional Standards Committee met 4 times and considered 9 matters in the reporting period.

84. Two matters were referred to the Disciplinary Tribunal during the reporting period.

### **The Professional Standards Committee**

85. There are seven members of the Professional Standards Committee. Under the provisions of the *Discipline Ordinance 2006*, the Committee's function is to consider complaints and make recommendations to the Archbishop concerning these matters.

86. This Committee meets as required and is currently scheduled to meet every second month.

### **Parish Recovery Teams**

87. Parish Recovery Teams (PRTs) are generally available to assist parishes where allegations of abuse or misconduct by clergy or church workers have arisen. A PRT works in a parish to deal with the complex pastoral issues that arise once these matters come to light. PRTs aid those members of the parish who are affected and work towards the healing of the parish as a whole.

88. In 2007 a group of nine volunteers for our PRTs was trained by Pastor Tim Dyer of John Mark Ministries. In 2010 a new team of nine volunteers began their training in conjunction with seven of the existing volunteers and this was completed in May 2012.

89. Due to numbers of Parish Recovery Team consultants being unable to continue with PRT work due to health and other reasons, a new team of 14 volunteers is being recruited and training has commenced.

90. In the reporting period, one PRT has deployed on a new matter and one PRT was reactivated due to legal proceedings progressing or reaching finality.

#### **Cooperation with NSW Government Agencies and Other Churches**

91. The NSW Police Child Protection and Joint Investigation Squad Advisory Council meets together several times a year and the Director of the PSU continues to be a member of this Council.

92. There have been a number of meetings with representatives from the NSW Ombudsman's Office to discuss whether the application of the *Ombudsman Act NSW 1974* does or could include misconduct of certain 'employees' in the Diocese directed towards children in particular circumstances. If the Act applies, such matters would therefore need to be reported to the NSW Ombudsman's Office which would then provide a level of oversight and/or review in those cases. At the time of preparing this report, although work has begun on these matters, a final position has yet to be reached.

93. The Diocese continues to work together with other denominations in areas of safe ministry. One example of this collaborative approach is the National Council of Churches Safe Churches Sydney group. This group meets occasionally to focus on developing initiatives for churches in the area of child protection. The PSU Chaplain attends these meetings as the PSU representative.

94. The National Network of Directors of Professional Standards from Anglican Dioceses across Australia meets together each quarter. The Director of the PSU continues to be an active member of the Network. 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 endeavour to ensure that best practice in processes are maintained across Dioceses.

#### **Finance**

95. The SMB receives accounting reports on a monthly basis. PSU accounts are reported in the Synod Funds reports provided to members of Synod.

96. In 2013 the PSU was provided a PCR funding increase in the amount of \$11,000 per annum to pay for further ongoing work that is required following the review of the Diocesan Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme. The recommendations following the review requiring attention include the preparation of a leaflet for the Scheme in 'plain language'. Such a leaflet would need to be more accessible, making it clear that complainants are free to seek legal advice at any point in the process, but that it is not necessary for them to have legal representation to make a claim through the Scheme, although it is a requirement that they receive legal advice before signing the Deed (up to now it has only been strongly recommended). This work is expected to commence shortly.

97. In 2013 the Standing Committee agreed to fund Tribunal matters from contingencies, which therefore removes these rather unpredictable and expensive costs from the ordinary operating budget of the PSU. This is a significant step towards greater certainty for the funding of the work of the PSU and has assisted with budgeting.

98. In the coming years it is crucial for the PSU to be adequately funded and resourced in order for the Unit to do its work properly and effectively.

#### **Conclusion**

99. As we approach the end of the second year since the Royal Commission was established, it has been a challenging but fascinating time to be working in the area of child protection and safe ministry. As work is undertaken in preparation for and in response to the Royal Commission the SMB and the PSU, together with the Steering Committee, are determined to make important and lasting improvements in these areas to help to ensure churches in our Diocese are safer places both now and into the future.

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

THE REV DR KEITH CONDIE  
*Chair*

*Safe Ministry Board*  
16 July 2014

LACHLAN BRYANT  
*Director*

*Professional Standards Unit*  
16 July 2014