

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
HELD AT SAINT PAUL'S NATIONAL SEMINARY, KENSINGTON, N.S.W.,
ON TUESDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER, 1995, AT 3.30 P.M.

1. PRESENT: Most Reverend Kevin Manning, Chairman;
Most Reverend Geoffrey Robinson;
Most Reverend Peter Connors, Secretary;
Ms Myolene Carrick;
Sister Helen Clarke, R.S.C.;
Reverend Brian Gallagher, M.S.C.;
Reverend Brian Lucas;
Sister Angela Ryan, C.S.B.;
Reverend John Usher;
Sister Evelyn Woodward, R.S.J.

Mr. Chris O'Malley, Mr. Paul Serong and Mr. Laurie Rolls, of Catholic Church Insurances Limited, were also present at the meeting.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

On the motion of Sister Angela Ryan, seconded Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th August, 1995, were accepted as being a faithful record of decisions made and of matters discussed.

3. MATTERS RAISED BY C.C.I.

3.1 Current Position with Insurance Cover provided by C.C.I.

Mr. O'Malley provided the members with some statistical information concerning matters which are being dealt with by C.C.I.

There is a problem with the Indemnity Cover provided for the Christian Brothers of West Australia. In particular, there is a limit to the Pool of money which is available for claims under Special Issues for 1991. It may be necessary for the Courts to decide how this Pool is to be distributed.

There are other technicalities which are to be considered by C.C.I. in determining the precise moment when injury has occurred.

Until the present time most settlements of claims made against Bishops and Religious Leaders have come from the cover provided by the Public Liability Policy.

More information will be provided for the Bishops when they meet in May, 1996.

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3.2 Media Service

C.C.I. has engaged the services of a Media Consultant who will be able to assist C.C.I. when there is a call for information to be provided by C.C.I. to the media.

This advisory service is also available to Dioceses and Religious Congregations.

3.3 Risk Management Services

The Risk Management Service, which is provided under the supervision of Mr. Laurie Rolls, is now being used by Dioceses and Religious Congregations.

A Report will be made available to the Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards concerning the implication for Bishops and Religious Leaders of the Statute which, in Victoria and New South Wales, provides for the misprision of a felony.

C.C.I. are also conducting an inquiry concerning the protection of files which are held by investigators and/or counsellors acting on behalf of Professional Standards Resource Groups in the various States.

It is expected that a Report will be made available for the next meeting of the Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards.

C.C.I. are also arranging for the preparation of a Contract to regulate the access of alleged victims for counselling services provided by Dioceses and Religious Congregations.

One of the members reported that he had received a 'subpoena' for all the files which he held concerning allegations against Catholic Church personnel. He was advised to seek the assistance of a solicitor in reviewing all the files which he holds.

The Report, which will be made available by C.C.I., will be of assistance in such matters.

4. REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A THERAPY PROGRAMME

Father Usher reported that arrangements have been made for the presentation of a preliminary Report, concerning the establishment of a Therapy Programme for alleged offenders of sexual assault, at a meeting of the A.C.B.C. and representatives of Religious Congregations on Wednesday, 29th November, 1995.

Particular emphasis will be given to the assessment of clients and also to the need for Research.

An estimate has been made that there is a considerable number of men who are very much in need of such a Programme at the present time.

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5. REPORT ON THE PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT WORKING PAPER
"REVISED PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL
MISCONDUCT"

The members were in receipt of a draft Working Paper entitled, "Revised Protocol for Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Misconduct", which had been prepared by Father Brian Lucas in concert with Mr. Laurie Rolls of C.C.I. and other advisers.

C.C.I. had made a close examination of all Protocols containing Procedures which are being used at the present time by Dioceses and Religious Congregations.

The N.S.W. Professional Standards Resource Group has been of particular assistance to Father Lucas in carrying out the Review. He has also been greatly assisted by the Procedures drafted by Father Frank Morrissey, O.M.I.

It was noted that the Procedures will eventually become a public document and be subject to close scrutiny by the media and by other interested groups. Therefore, close attention must be given to the listing of priorities.

It was agreed that comments from the members of the B.C.P.S. are to be forwarded to Father Brian Lucas no later than Friday, 15th December, 1995.

It was noted that there will be serious problems if Dioceses and Religious Institutes deviate in a substantial manner from observing the Procedures. Schools and hospitals will have their own grievance procedures.

Leaders of Clerical Religious Congregations will need to give very special attention to the implications of the revised Procedures.

6. REPORT ON "SEXUAL ABUSE BY PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS: A
STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES"

Bishop Robinson was congratulated for the revision of the document "Sexual Abuse by Priests and Religious: A Statement of Principles", which he completed on 28th October, 1995.

He noted that he had received many comments from interested persons in drawing up this Revision. However, a number of the comments which he had received were contradictory.

It was agreed that copies of the draft should now be made available for Bishops for their consideration. They are also invited to forward comments and/or advice to Bishop Robinson.

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7. REVIEW OF ABSTRACT FOR THE WORKSHOP AT THE CONFERENCE ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION BY HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, PSYCHOTHERAPISTS AND CLERGY

Father Usher reported that the Programme for the Conference on Sexual Exploitation by Health Professionals, Psychotherapists and Clergy, which is to be held in Sydney in April, 1996, has now been finalised.

It was agreed that Bishop Robinson, Father Usher and Sister Angela Ryan should represent the Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards in conducting the Workshop at the Conference.

The Abstract, which has now been prepared, is to be discussed with Dr. Robert Grant when he visits Sydney on 19th December, 1995.

Bishop Connors reported that Mr. Ray Reid, of Centacare in the Diocese of Parramatta, has been given a Churchill Fellowship to study the Response of the Catholic Church to the needs of Congregations and/or Communities when allegations of sexual abuse have become public.

8. REPRESENTATION AT THE MEETING OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES DEALING WITH CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE BY CLERGY

It was agreed that Bishop Connors should represent the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference at the meeting of English-speaking Episcopal Conferences, dealing with child sexual abuse by clergy, which is to be held in Chicago, U.S.A., from 7th - 9th May, 1996.

Father Brian Lucas, Sister Angela Ryan, C.S.B., and Mr. Laurie Rolls will also attend the meeting.

Bishop Connors will make arrangements for supplementary information to be forwarded to Father Thomas Bevan prior to Christmas, 1995.

9. PREPARATIONS FOR MEETING WITH DOCTOR ROBERT GRANT ON MONDAY, 18TH, AND TUESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 1995.

Bishop Robinson reported that Doctor Robert Grant has made himself available for two days rather than one day, as had been previously expected.

Father Brian Lucas will make arrangements for these meetings to take place at Saint Mary's Cathedral Presbytery.

The draft document, "Sexual Abuse by Priests and Religious: A Statement of Principles", will be the basis for the discussions with Doctor Grant on Monday, 18th December.

On the following day he will be invited to assist the Committee with the forthcoming visitation of Australian Seminaries, which is to be conducted by Bishop Robinson.

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9. (Cont.)

Assistance will also be sought from Doctor Grant in making preparations for the presentation of the Workshop at the Conference on "Sexual Exploitation by Health Professionals, Psychotherapists and Clergy".

The management of cases is another matter which can be discussed with Doctor Grant.

10. MANDATE FOR BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Bishop Connors tabled a revision of the Mandate for Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards.

Members are invited to forward comments on the draft to Bishop Connors.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS

Bishop Manning reported that he had received a communication from Ms Liz Moriarty, who has obtained a Master's Degree from Monash University with a high distinction. She has also given Bishop Manning a copy of her Thesis and wishes to undertake further research.

*J. Usher
comment.*

|| It was agreed that the research already carried out by Ms Moriarty may be of assistance in the establishment of the Therapy Programme.

Father John Usher reported that Ms Jan Cranny had also completed a research project which had been of assistance in the preparation of the Report on the Therapy Centre.

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