

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

A Committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops & the
Australian Leaders of Religious Institutes

MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

22 OCTOBER 1996

49 GORDON ST. PADDINGTON NSW

10.00AM TO 4.00PM

AGENDA ITEMS

1. WELCOME
2. PRESENT/APOLOGIES
3. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES (6 August 1996)
4. CONFIRMATION OF THE PROPOSED AGENDA.
5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.
 - ✓ 5.1 The procedures document (Briefing Note One)
 - ✓ 5.2 The principles document (Briefing Note One)
 - ✓ 5.3 Contact with police services. (Briefing Note Two)
 - ✓ 5.4 NSW Royal Commission into Police Services (Briefing Note Three)
 - ✓ 5.5 Name of the Committee
 - ✓ 5.6 Code of Conduct (Briefing Note Four)
 - ✓ 5.7 National Treatment Program (attachment)
 - ✓ 5.8 Research project by ACSWC and Centacare Sydney. (Briefing Note Five)
 - ✓ 5.9 Independent study of cases of sexual abuse. (Briefing Note Six)
 - ✓ 5.10 Mandate of the Committee

Literature Search Flood Room

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✓ 5.11 Visit by Dr. Ray Wyre

✓ 6. BUDGET ISSUES

6.1 Letter from Father McKenna to the Chair of the National Committee. (Briefing Note Seven)

✓ 7. REPORT FROM ACLRI

✓ 8. REPORT FROM CCI

✓ 9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 Plan of the Archdiocese of Melbourne re local protocol. (Briefing Note Eight)
(copy of letter attached)

10. NEXT MEETING DATE.

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5.3

BRIEFING NOTE NO 2

TO: National Committee for Professional Standards

FROM: Father David Cappo

DATE: 16 October 1996

RE: Request for Archbishops' to arrange contact with the Chief Commissioner of Police in their State/Territory.

I have written to all Archbishops (copy of letter attached) requesting them to initiate contact with their respective police commissioners in order to establish proper procedural arrangements with police services regarding the issue of investigation by the police of criminal complaints of sexual abuse against church personnel.

The proper place and timing of church assessments would be a key issue for the ongoing discussions between professional standards resource group personnel and senior police officers.

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NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

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3 September, 1996

COPY

Most Rev Dr E D'Arcy, DD, PhD
Archbishop of Hobart
GPO Box 62A
HOBART TAS 7001

Your Grace

RE: CHURCH AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS OF CRIMINAL ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

The August 6 meeting of the National Professional Standards Committee addressed amongst other issues the tension between the Church's investigation of criminal allegations of sexual abuse and police investigations of these matters. The broad issue of the need for appropriate dialogue and understanding between Church authorities and police authorities was discussed.

The meeting recommended that metropolitan Archbishops, on behalf of their province, be asked to contact the Chief Police Commissioner in their State or Territory in order to establish formal dialogue between provincial professional standards resource groups and designated police officers about issues and procedures in dealing with complaints of sexual abuse against Church personnel.

Reflection on the handling of some cases of diocesan priests and religious accused of child sexual assault indicate that if there had been agreements in place as to how and when both the Church and the Police were to respond to such allegations the needs of all parties concerned would have been more appropriately met. As well, the needs of victims could have been more quickly understood and responded to; the Church's response to the situation of the accused priest or religious could have been quicker and more informed; the issue of 'standing down' handled more clearly; interviewing could have been better coordinated; the possibility of evidence being inadvertently contaminated avoided; police interviews and follow up could have occurred more quickly.

On behalf of the Committee, I would be most grateful if you would be prepared to contact the Chief Commissioner of Police in your State in order to begin a process of formal dialogue between nominated police officers and provincial professional standards committees.

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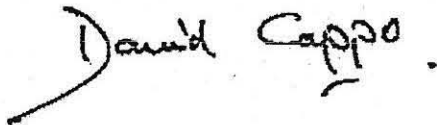
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It is envisaged that following discussions between authorized church and police personnel letters of agreement would be exchanged at the highest level of Church and Police authority in each State or Territory. This would signal to both organisations the seriousness of the issue and the resolve of each body to engage in cooperative dialogue and to work to accepted procedures. It is hoped that such a set of agreed upon procedures would ensure that justice is better served and the Church's legal and pastoral obligations more adequately met. A further aim of dialogue between personnel would be to develop a cooperative agreement of roles and obligations (eg. in what circumstances would police and not Church personnel conduct interviews, or vice versa) and to establish short time frames for interviews of victims and alleged offenders.

Bishop Manning, Chairman of the National Professional Standards Committee has authorised me to assist you, if you wish, in either arranging this meeting or in accompanying Church personnel of your choosing to the meeting. There is much advantage in these meetings having a local focus but seen to be part of a nationally coordinated approach.

Please contact Bishop Manning or myself if you wish to discuss this request further.

Yours sincerely



Fr David Cappo
Executive Officer