

# Professional Standards Office

Established by the Bishops and Leaders of Religious Institutes  
of the Catholic Church  
in NSW and the ACT

276 Pitt Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Telephone: (02) 9287 1542

8 October 1999

Most Rev M Malone DD  
Bishop of Maitland Newcastle  
PO Box 780  
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300

## Private and Confidential

Dear Bishop Malone,

Please find enclosed the Statement of Complaint from *AE* against Fr Denis McAlinden received here today. I am advised by the police that *AE* has now also made a complaint to them.

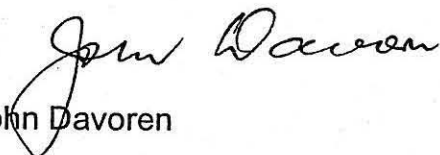
Please also find a copy of our routine letter of acknowledgment to *AE*. May I suggest that an acknowledgment also be sent from the diocese. I enclose a suggested letter for your consideration.

From experience we find that this second letter is reassuring for the complainant and helps to relieve the inevitable tension that follows the making of a complaint. Our acknowledgment is only a bureaucratic reply from a remote office with a function that is not clear to the recipient. A letter from the Bishop, on the other hand, allows the person to feel that her complaint has been heard.

I also enclose Ms Foat's account in taking this complaint.

I will, of course, be happy to talk to you about any or all of this as you wish.

Yours sincerely,



John Davoren

Encl

Dear ,

I have received your statement of complaint that you made to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
against \_\_\_\_\_

I have some understanding of how difficult it must have been for you to have made this statement. I was very sorry to hear that you have suffered in the ways that you describe in your document.

I can assure you that your statement is being taken very seriously, and that the circumstances you have reported will be examined carefully.

The next step will depend on what action the police decide to take. If they begin an investigation, the Church is, of course, is not permitted to make its own inquiries until the police have finished theirs, and then probably will not need to start a separate inquiry.

Unfortunately the whole process can take much longer than most people expect, so please do not think that you have been forgotten if you do not hear from anyone for some time. You will be advised as the matter progresses.

I hope that the processes that have now commenced will help you to achieve some satisfactory personal resolution around what was obviously for you a most disturbing experience at a very vulnerable time in your life.

Yours etc