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## Safer Churches Helpline Report January – March 2016

The following report provides an outline of the volume and nature of, as well as actions taken in relation to, ACC Safer Churches Helpline (Helpline) enquiries received by SMR in the first quarter of 2016 (January – March).

The report for this quarter (Q1) was compiled by Belinda Townsend (SMR Helpline Coordinator) and Peter Barnett (SMR Director).

The Q1 Helpline Report incorporates the information previously provided for 1 January to 3 February 2016, in the report for 16 November 2015 to 3 February 2016.

The Helpline Summary Table (pp 3-5) provides the details of this report.

In January – March 2016 there were 44 calls or email enquiries made through the Helpline.

The numbering system seen in the Helpline Summary Table relates to the State or Territory of origin, starting as of January 2016. Anonymous calls/messages left on the voicemail of the Helpline are classified as "Anon".

State Breakdown of Enquiries/Reports of the 44 calls/emails.

| State     | Number of enquiries/reports |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| QLD       | 22                          |
| NSW & ACT | 11                          |
| VIC       | 1                           |
| TAS       | 3                           |
| SA        | 3                           |
| WA        | 3                           |
| Anon      | 1                           |

Queensland churches have been the most active in contacting the Helpline with 50% of enquiries/reports, followed by NSW & ACT with 25%. The other states and

territories combined make up a total of 23% of enquiries/reports. As seen in the table there was one anonymous voicemail message.

One reason for the high number of calls coming from Queensland churches is the large number of leaders who have attended an ACC Safer Churches Awareness Workshops in Queensland since launching in December 2015. To date, the Queensland State Office has used approximately 1,500 ACC Safer Churches Manuals and 500 additional manuals have been ordered for use in the near future.

In relation to the type of calls and emails:

| Type   | Number of enquiries/reports |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Reports of child-related sexual assault  | 8                           |
| Reports related to other forms of abuse/misconduct alleged by church leader/member | 12                          |
| Reports about style of leadership/grievances                                       | 3                           |
| Enquiries in relation to Safer Churches implementation                             | 19                          |
| Non Safer Churches related calls   | 2                           |

This equates to 47.8% Safer Churches implementation enquiries and 52.2% response-related reports.

There were 5 reports in relation to certificated persons and 18 reports in relation to other church leaders or members.

One anecdotal observation from the operation of the Helpline in the first quarter is the limited amount of information forthcoming from the person phoning the Helpline. It has been observed that during the full response to the initial call, the State Based Officer and/or case manager will receive far more information about the matter as the person reporting begins to trust in the Movement's response. One example of this is the unwillingness of a third party to disclose the names of the alleged victims or alleged perpetrator in the initial call. The table below shows that the large majority of reports are made by a third party (95%).

The total number of hours spent by SMR on Helpline matters January to March 2016 was 29 hours.