



# Anglican Church of Australia DIOCESE OF TASMANIA

*From the Registrar  
William Haas*

Fitzgerald and Browne  
GPO Box 1951  
HOBART TAS 7001

13 January 2003

Dear Mr Browne,

Thank you for your letter dated 10 January 2003 relating to Mr Steven Fisher.

As Bishop John Harrower has expressed publicly and privately to Mr Fisher the Anglican Church community is extremely sorry for the abuse suffered by Mr Fisher caused by a then clergyman.

However there is no legal liability attaching to the Church for Mr Hawkins' actions. The Church condemns Mr Hawkins behaviour and has taken disciplinary action against him.

Clergy within the Anglican Church are not employees of the church, but are Office Holders. The legal advice we have obtained is that the principles of vicarious liability do not apply.

The first complaint the Diocese received about Garth Hawkins was when Mr Fisher made his complaint. It was immediately referred to the police who declined to proceed. The Church then investigated the matter independently and this resulted in Mr Hawkins' Holy Orders being withdrawn.

The Diocese has provided counselling with a psychologist of Mr Fisher's choosing since he reported these matters to the Bishop. Subject to the need for his counselling to be extended the Diocese is prepared to continue payment as a matter of pastoral care.

The Diocese is continuing to consider its pastoral response and a committee has been formed for this purpose.

If you have any queries please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

William Haas  
Registrar

Copy to: The Bishop

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