

**John Cleary**

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**From:** Colin Elliott [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 3 July 2012 1:23 PM  
**To:** Danielle Veronesi  
**Cc:** John Cleary  
**Subject:** Re: Letter from Bishop Peter Stuart - Professional Standards

Dr. Peter Stuart,  
 Assistant Bishop and Commissary,  
 The Anglican Diocese of Newcastle,  
 NEWCASTLE.

Dear Dr. Peter,

I have prayerfully considered your letter of 28 June, 2012, and am grateful for the prayers and good will of the Diocese.

The import of Section 69 of the Professional Standards Ordinance, 2005 (as amended) requires the sitting of the Board to be an open sitting. There are exceptions, about which the President of the Board has an absolute discretion. The sitting of the Board, in my view, includes the hearing of the evidence and submissions, the handing down of the determination and of the recommendation.

Section 75(a) merely requires the Board to "cause a copy of each....to be provided to the relevant church authority...". I am of the view that there cannot be such a copy made until it has been delivered (i.e. read) onto the record in the public hearing.

I am satisfied it is not in the interests of the integrity of the Board for a determination or recommendation to be first forwarded to the relevant Church Authority. If that were to occur, I apprehend there could be an adverse public perception of the Board's procedures. The usual practice is that the determinations and recommendations are directed by the Board to be forwarded to the Church Authority immediately after delivery.

I note, too that S.75(b) requires such a copy to be served on the Respondent. It really cannot be expected that the Respondent would also be provided with a copy prior to it being publicly delivered.

I'm sure I mentioned this to Bishop Brian in December, 2010, after he had heard of the outcomes of other cases from an irate parishioner by phone. I think I mentioned to him that a good response to such a parishioner might have been along the lines: "I am sorry but I can't comment on those outcomes until I have had the opportunity to read them. Our Professional Standards Board makes those decisions. It is comprised of people well qualified to make them and I have confidence in them. When I have read their findings I will be in a position to make a statement."

Section 58 of the Ordinance enables the president of the Board to make rules "reasonably required ....in relation to the practice and procedure of the Board." Having regard for this issue having been raised by yourself and Bishop Brian, it may be appropriate for a rule to be made as to when Section 75 is to be complied with. I would be pleased to consider any representations you may make to assist me in determining such a Rule.

Please be assured that my intentions as President have been, really to "take the heat off" Church Authorities by ensuring - as far as possible - that there is transparency of proceedings in an open forum. It is my opinion that in this way, confidence in the Church may be restored.

Prayerfully, in Truth and Justice.

C.A. Elliott,  
President, Professional Standards Board.

On 28/06/2012, at 10:49 AM, Danielle Veronesi wrote:

Dear Mr Elliott,

Please see attached letter from Bishop Peter Stuart.

The original letter will be posted to you today.

Thank you  
Danielle

**Danielle Veronesi**  
Executive Assistant to the Diocesan Business Manager & Assistant Bishop  
Anglican Diocese of Newcastle

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