

M E M O R A N D U M

Date: 3 December 2002
 Subject: Bob Brandenburg complaints

1. I had no knowledge of the complaints against Mr Brandenburg until he committed suicide on the day he was scheduled to appear in court to face charges of sexual abuse.
2. We took the matter very seriously and have always been concerned about potential victims.
3. One complaint was made to the diocese by a man who claimed to have been abused by Brandenburg. The diocese paid for a significant period of counselling for him by a counsellor of his choice.
4. CEBS leaders throughout the state were asked to enquire amongst present and past membership about possible victims. No one was identified.
5. One of our priests brought a man to see me who said he was a victim of abuse by Brandenburg. We discussed this at length. I offered counselling or any other help that we could provide but he said he had no need at this stage.
6. At Synod 2000 I raised the issue as a matter of importance and reported that
 - a. During the previous 12 months an education program had been initiated by circulating a brochure outlining the diocese approach to sexual misconduct which was supplied in significant numbers to every congregation.
 - b. A telephone helpline was established.
 - c. Guidelines endorsed by Synod in 1994 for receiving and dealing with complaints of sexual misconduct in the church were revised.
 - d. We adopted a code of practice for the protection of children in the life of the church, including all aspects of safety and responsibility of children in the care of the church.
 - e. A special clergy conference was devoted to addressing matters of professional conduct in pastoral situations.
7. In 2001 the diocese required every person working with children or young people to have a police check and almost every appropriate person has been through that process.
8. In the light of the debate in Brisbane a special statement of concern was issued for reading to all parish congregations in December 2001 and further supplies of the information brochure were distributed.
9. Early in February 2002, I released a media statement inviting anyone who had been hurt by sexual abuse in the church to come forward and we would do whatever we could to help. An 1800 contact number was advertised. This release made front-page news in "The Advertiser" and was covered by all TV stations and many radio stations.

A number of complaints were received, but not one related to Brandenburg.

D.C. confirmed July 1999

10. During 2002, we have continued to review our protocols and procedures. Diocesan Council set up a Sexual Abuse Task Group which has made further recommendations for improving our processes, including contracting out contact work to an independent counselling organisation. Implementation of that is in progress.