

From: Philip Gerber, LL.M.
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Mr Ken Harkness
Chairman
CEBS - Anglican Boys Society
(Diocese of Sydney Incorporated)
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Dear Ken

VOLUNTARY SCREENING OF VOLUNTEERS PILOT PROGRAM

I am writing regarding the issue of CEBS being involved in the pilot Volunteers & Students Screening Program under the NSW Commission for Children & Young People Working with Children Check. I note that you indicated initially to the Commission that you would not be able to participate because CEBS lacked sufficient resources to be a suitable organisation for the pilot program.

I am writing to now propose that CEBS and other boys only ministries that are conducted in our parishes join the pilot program under the auspices of the Archbishop's Professional Standards Unit.

I envisage that it would work this way. The Archbishop would write to all Rectors and Ministers-In-Charge inviting them to be involved in the Volunteers & Students Screening Program on a voluntary basis for all volunteers who work with their CEBS or boys ministry activities. With the Archbishop's letter would be a one page return. The return would have the Rector or Minister-In-Charge indicate whether or not they have a CEBS or boys ministry. If they did, then they would be asked to indicate the type of ministry, the number of boys involved in the ministry and the names of all volunteers who participate in the ministry. They would be asked to return to us a copy of the Prohibited Employment Declaration (Attachment 4) signed by each person and also the original of a Consent Form (Attachment 3) for each of the volunteers. The Professional Standards Unit would then, as agent for the "Employer" Rector/Minister-In-Charge submit a Working With Children Check Request Form (Attachment 6) to the Commission for Children & Young People and upon receipt of a reply provide that information to the relevant Rector or Minister-In-Charge. Any screening "hits" would mean the PSU, the Rector and the volunteer participating in a risk assessment.

I have enclosed a draft letter from the Archbishop which would be sent to each Rector or Minister-In-Charge together with a draft return and copies of the Prohibited Employment Declaration (Attachment 4) and Consent Form (Attachment 3).

Could you please advise whether the Council of CEBS Sydney would be prepared to co-operate with this screening program. It would certainly be an indication from the Church that we are prepared to have our ministries which historically have been high risk looked at from the point of view of screening. Apart from any benefit which might flow in terms of protection of children, it would also be a significant public relations positive for the Archbishop and CEBS to participate in such a Volunteers Screening Program.

I look forward to hearing from you after you have discussed this matter with the Council of CEBS, Sydney.

With every good wish.

Yours faithfully

Philip Gerber