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Diocese of Grafton

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Right Reverend Keith Slater

FROM: Pat Comben

DATE: 9th December 2005

SUBJECT: Pastoral Care and Assistance Package for **REDACTED**

BACKGROUND

As you are aware **REDACTED** now of **REDACTED** brought to the Church an allegation of sexual abuse against a cleric licensed within this Diocese and who was a former Rector within this Diocese. The matter was investigated by the Professional Standards Committee and referred to a hearing of the Professional Standards Board. The hearing of the Professional Standards Board was conducted in Grafton early this year.

Attached is a copy of the "Statement of Allegations." This is effectively the "charge" and particulars of the matter of which the cleric stood accused. The Board heard these matters and their decision is based on these matters.

The Boards decision was contained in the last two paragraphs of its reasons and its decisions:

"(67) Different members of the Board placed difference emphasis on these considerations; however they were the essential considerations of all members of the Board. Some members of the Board were adamant throughout the Boards deliberations on recommendation that only the position from Holy Orders were be a satisfactory recommendation. Other members initially took a different view. However, it was resolved in the end, unanimously, that weighing the above considerations and in particular the seriousness of the misconduct and the lack of repentance, that the only appropriate recommendation is that L be deposed from Holy Orders."

"(68) The Board so recommends."

PRESENT SITUATION

REDACTED has approached you by letter asking if the matter of care and assistance to him could be expedited and not left to the (potentially slow) internal processes to the Sydney Diocesan Care and Review Panel. On your behalf I indicated to the contact person working with REDACTED that in view of the very recent decision in Bishop-In-Council to adopt the Sydney process it would be difficult for the Dioceses of Grafton to initiate any sort of offer outside of the formal system which has just been put in place.

Approaches were also made by REDACTED to the Professional Standards Committee through the contact person and last Thursday the Diocese received a letter from REDACTED of REDACTED Physiological Services in Tasmania, acting as advocate for REDACTED to seek expeditious handling of the matter. This letter is appended. You may note that on page 2 (second paragraph) REDACTED requests "an ex gratis payment of \$60,000 ... for his pain and suffering."

On Friday night I spoke to REDACTED and indicated that any ex gratis payment would have to be at a level commensurate with the "Schedule of Financial Assistance" appended to the Pastoral Care and Assistance Frequently Asked Questions pamphlet which she and REDACTED have.

I indicated to REDACTED that it was difficult to see objectively that REDACTED could suggest that the matters found to be true in his complaint could be at a higher level than Category 2 in the events area of the Schedule or Category 2 in the effects area of the Schedule. The total of these two is only \$57,500.00.

I suggested that an amount of money less than \$50,000.00 would appear to me to be a figure with which the church could be comfortable. REDACTED sought advice from her client and rang me at home late in the evening and said that REDACTED would be prepared to accept a figure of \$54,500.00.

I also attach a three page statement headed "REDACTED Physiological (an overview)." This was used as a Victim Impact Statement at the time of the Board hearing and my assessment watching the proceedings was that this document, about which REDACTED was questioned, was accepted by the Board hearing the matter.

The request and documents in this matter indicate that some priority should be considered for the matter, especially in view of the long period of time it took to obtain a final Board Decision.

Recommendation

That

1. the matter of Care and Assistance Support package for REDACTED be referred to the Executive of Bishop-in-Council;
2. that you seek from that Executive a decision that REDACTED be granted an ex gratis payment of \$54,500 as part of the Care and Assistance Support package on the condition that REDACTED signs an appropriate Deed of Release to the Diocese stopping any future action.

Regards

Pat Comben
Registrar

The Anglican Church of Australia