

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
HELD AT SAINT PAUL'S NATIONAL SEMINARY, KENSINGTON, N.S.W.,
ON TUESDAY, 16TH APRIL, 1996, AT 2.00 P.M.

1. PRESENT: Most Reverend Kevin Manning, Chairman,
 Most Reverend Geoffrey Robinson,
 Most Reverend Peter Connors, Secretary,
 Sister Helen Clarke, R.S.C.,
 Ms Myolene Carrick,
 Reverend Brian Gallagher, M.S.C.,
 Reverend Brian Lucas,
 Sister Angela Ryan, C.S.B.,
 Reverend John Usher,
 Sister Evelyn Woodward, R.S.J.

Mr. Laurie Rolls of Catholic Church Insurances Limited was also present at the meeting, along with Dr. Robert Grant, psychologist.

Mr. Toby O'Connor and Mr. Bill Johnston also attended the meeting when the report on the establishment of a Therapy Centre was discussed by the Committee.

2. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BISHOPS'
COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS HELD ON 28TH FEBRUARY,
1996.

On the motion of Sister Angela Ryan, seconded Bishop Robinson, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards, held on 28th February, 1996, were confirmed as being an accurate record of the decisions made on that occasion.

3. MATTERS RAISED BY C.C.I.

Mr. Rolls reported that the Mixed Commission of Bishops and Religious Leaders had asked for details of the Risk Management Procedures and the Guidelines for the Retention of Documents, which were being drawn up by C.C.I.

Bishop Mulkearns will now report back to the Mixed Commission after receiving instructions from C.C.I.

4. PROPOSALS CONCERNING DOCUMENTS WHICH REQUIRE THE APPROVAL
OF A.C.B.C. AND A.C.L.R.I.

Bishop Robinson, Sister Angela Ryan and Father John Usher provided comments re the Conference on Sexual Exploitation by Health Professionals, Psychotherapists and Clergy, which was held in Sydney on 13th-14th April, 1996.

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4. (Cont.)

It was agreed that the participation of representatives of the Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards had been a very worthwhile exercise. An excellent spirit prevailed throughout the Conference and all papers which were presented at the Conference will be published in the near future.

Doctor Grant also attended the Conference and emphasised the importance of empathy with victims. He also assessed from his presence at the Conference that there will be a strong move to criminalise certain actions when there have been violations of sexual boundaries by clergy and religious. Father Usher also stressed the urgency of the matter.

Discussion then took place over a prolonged period of time concerning the document of Principles in the light of comments which had been received from Mr. Frank Costigan, Q.C., the Friends of Susanna and Archbishop D'Arcy.

It was particularly noted that victims are seeking Institutional Response. They are also demanding that perpetrators no longer remain in a situation where they are able to hurt others.

Because the Committee was unable to agree upon the emphasis which should be placed in the document of Principles, advice should be sought from the A.C.B.C. and the A.C.L.R.I.

It was agreed that the remaining proposals which had been drafted by Bishop Robinson should be tabled as motions at the Assemblies of the A.C.B.C. and the A.C.L.R.I. (cf. Appendix 1)

It was also decided that if the Bishops are unable to agree upon the emphasis which should be placed in the document of Principles, a Mandate should be sought from the Bishops for the Committee to publish the Principles and the revised Procedures in the name of the Committee.

Father John Usher kindly offered to arrange for a budget to be proposed for the employment of the Chief Executive Officer as proposed in item 6.

5. REPORT ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A THERAPY CENTRE

Mr. Toby O'Connor and Mr. Bill Johnston attended the meeting and received warm congratulations from the Committee on the high standard of the Report which has now been made available to Bishops and Religious Leaders.

Mr. Johnston reported that there had been a slight overrun of the budget for the drawing up of the Report, but these costs will be met by Grants from Centacare Sydney and the Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission.

It was also decided that letters of appreciation should be forwarded to Professor Blaszczyński and Mr. Toby O'Connor.

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6. PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETING OF ENGLISH SPEAKING EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES DEALING WITH CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE BY CLERGY.

Bishop Connors reported that Sister Angela Ryan, Father Brian Lucas, Mr. Laurie Rolls and himself had met earlier that day to decide how they would make use of the half hour which had been allotted to the Australian delegation to make its presentation at the Conference, which is to be held in Chicago, U.S.A., in May, 1996.

7. MANDATE FOR BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS.

Because of insufficient time and the absence of several members from the Committee which resumed at 7.00 p.m., no further discussion took place concerning the drafting of a Mandate for the Bishops' Committee for Professional Standards.

8. WOUNDED BROTHERS PROJECT

The Committee took note of the correspondence between Father Bertin Miller, dated 12th March, 1996, and Father Brian Lucas.

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