



30th June 2016

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Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
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By email (solicitor@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au)

Confidential

Dear Sir,

Notice to Produce: C-NP-1811

In response to the Notice to Produce dated 20 June 2016 (No. C-NP-1811), please find **attached** the response to Questions 1 to 5 of Annexure A to your letter to Hillsong Church dated 23 May 2016.

1. What has Hillsong Church learnt from Case study 18?

Hillsong Church through its participation in the hearings and subsequent shared learnings which were provided in Case Study 18 to the Australian Christian Churches (ACC) and affiliated churches, benefited from the following points:

- The need for a consistent and more robust approach to the prevention of child sexual abuse.
- The need to further develop and maintain a culture that is more open and responsive to concerns, allegations or incidents.
- The need for clearer and more effective mechanisms for reporting of concerns, allegations, or incidents of child sexual abuse.
- The significant role that a Board of Directors has in providing oversight and monitoring the effectiveness of child protection measures.
- How effective governance measures and the segregation of duties can minimise the risk conflict of interests arising which may adversely affect the handling of an incident of child sexual abuse.
- When handling reports, allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse, the need for clearer and predefined delegations of responsibilities within a Church, and between a Church and ACC (when required).

Through its participation, Hillsong Church also validated its previously held position when administering disciplinary action to employees, including accredited ministers, who are alleged perpetrators of child sexual abuse. Employees who have sustained findings of a sexual offence will have their employment terminated, and will be given no means for reinstatement. Furthermore, they will not be permitted to attend any services conducted by Hillsong Church.

When reviewing the following responses, and supporting documents, you should observe that each of the learnings stated above have resulted in actions being undertaken through Hillsong Church's response to child sexual abuse.

2. *What action has the Hillsong Church taken as a result of the Case Study? In particular, any action relating to:*

- a. organisational structure, governance and culture*
- b. the promotion of a child safe organisation*
- c. child protection policy and procedures*
- d. staff recruitment policy and procedures*
- e. training and supervision of staff*
- f. policy and procedures to document and respond to allegations of child sexual abuse*
- g. redress policies and procedures*
- h. the communication of policies and procedures to the members of Hillsong Church*
- i. promote compliance with relevant policies and procedures.*

In response to the points learnt, as explained in the response to question 1, and its own improvements of the systems supporting child protection, Hillsong has undertaken a number of significant changes.

Organisational structure, governance and culture

From a governance perspective, the Hillsong Church Board of Directors reaffirmed its responsibility and commitment to child protection. The Board of Directors position was explained in the 'Hillsong Corporate Governance' statement under the heading of 'Safety & Child Protection'. The statement was published on 9 May 2016 on the Hillsong Church website and will be also published in the Hillsong Church 2015 Annual Report.

In March 2016, the Hillsong Church Board of Directors adopted the Safe Church Policy (i.e. Doc ID 5-1-001), with an agreed commencement date of 1 July 2016. The section titled 'Policy Statement' explains their commitment:

'...

Hillsong is committed to providing physical, emotional, and spiritual environments that are safe and secure for all Hillsong-Related People.

Through the outworking of the Safe Church Framework, Hillsong aims to reduce the risk of harm occurring to Hillsong-Related People. It is committed to a caring and appropriate response, should any suspicion, allegation, disclosure, or complaint of misconduct or abuse occur.

...'

At the Hillsong Audit Risk and Compliance Committee meeting, held in April 2016, the Committee were briefed on the implementation of the Safe Church Policy and Framework. The implementation was described in phases and given an estimated completion date. The first phase was termed 'Resource Development' which entailed the completion of procedures and manuals which are needed to train and equip staff and volunteers. The development of these resources had already commenced and would be completed by June 2016. The second phase of implementation explained was 'Training'. The training provided by the Safe Church Office, or authorised representative, would firstly be completed by all Pastors by November 2016, followed by all new and existing workers in child-related roles. The final and enduring phase was described as 'Support and Review', where the Safe Church Office would provide ongoing support to those responsible and review the framework which supports the fulfilment of Safe Church objectives. The Committee accepted the proposed implementation.

The adoption of the 'Safe Church Policy' enabled a significant change to occur, that was an adjustment to the organisational structure. The 'Safe Church Policy' provides a clear explanation of those responsibilities that have been retained by the Board, those that have been delegated, and who they have been delegated to. Some of the roles described had previously existed, but had not been given clear delegation of responsibility from the Board. Four new roles were created to facilitate a new approach to child protection and overall church safety. The roles created were Safe Church Office, Head of Safe Church Office, Head of Agency, and Investigators.

The function of the Safe Church Office, and its Head of Office, is to enable the effective implementation of practices that will fulfil the Board of Directors policy statement. As part of this role the Safe Church Office is responsible for the handling of disclosures of child sexual abuse, including the investigation and reporting to all relevant regulatory bodies.

The roles of 'Head of Agency' and 'Investigator' were created in recognition of Hillsong Church's responsibilities including under the *Ombudsman Act (NSW) 1974*, to investigate and make findings of reportable conduct. For the purposes of the Hillsong Safe Church Framework, the Head of Agency is the person who normally will make the final determination as to whether an allegation or disclosure is 'sustained', or 'not sustained' and provide the reason/s why, as described in the procedure 5-3-015 Making a Finding of Misconduct or Abuse.

For the roles that previously existed, clear delegation of responsibility was provided from the Board, for the purpose of ensuring key responsibilities are fulfilled and an increased level of accountability.

The understanding of responsibilities will be further enhanced with the introduction of the new Human Resources Information System (HRIS). A suitable software program was sourced during 2015 and purchased in March 2016, with implementation currently in progress. The HRIS will assist with the administration of job descriptions, dissemination of changes in policy and procedures, and delivery of training for all staff. Performance management of staff and records of disciplinary action will also be more effectively managed through this system.

One of the key responsibilities given to Executive Management is to 'develop and maintain a positive culture which is conducive to the effective protection of Hillsong Related People' (ref: Doc ID 5-1-001, section 5). Hillsong Church benefits from a strong and positive culture which is supportive of the protection of children and young people. The responsibility for enhancing this culture is something that the Executive Management have taken steps towards, and will continue to focus on, with the establishment of the Safe Church Office and the implementation of training and promotion going forward.

Promotion of a child safe organisation

Hillsong Church is renowned for the delivery of Church services and events that are edifying and relevant to children and young people. It also conducts many programs that provide practical support, such as counselling and crisis intervention, for child and young people. For this reason, the composition of the Hillsong Church congregation is predominately families with children and young adults.

Hillsong Church has and will continue to actively promote itself as a child safe organisation. This has been achieved at various levels. Firstly, through documentation such as the Hillsong Children and Young People Protection Statement (hillsong.com/policies/hillsong-children-and-young-people-protection-statement/) and Working With Children and Young People Code of Conduct (i.e. Doc ID 5-5-003) which every worker in a child-related role is required to consent to in writing. Promotion occurs through regular verbal communication with employees and volunteers during staff meeting and volunteer team meetings. Hillsong Church has also founded community based programs and campaigns for the welfare of children and young people, such as 'Hillsong Youth Services' and 'The String Movement - Disarming Bullying Campaign'.

Since the hearings in October 2014, Hillsong Church has undertaken the promotion of its role as a child safe organisation through internal briefings to staff and volunteers. Also, statements have been made in the 2014 annual report (and will again for the 2015 report) about the services and support to children and young people. The biggest promotion resulted from the re-recruitment of all volunteers working with children, that has been described below.

With the establishment of the Safe Church Office and the implementation that it is responsible for, significant promotional activities will be undertaken in the period from July to December 2016, and sustained going forward. The Safe Church Office will be releasing a new Hillsong Volunteer Code of Conduct and Hillsong Volunteer Workers Agreement (refer to 5-5-001, and 5-5-002) that will be applicable to all volunteers, including those in child-related roles. Also, a promotional campaign will be developed for communicating the 'shared responsibilities' and Safe Church Office contact details to the Hillsong Church congregation.

Child protection policies and procedures

The further development of Hillsong Church child protection policy happened in two stages. The first stage was the active support provided to the ACC National Office in the development of their Child Protection Policy. Key personnel of Hillsong Church were included in an advisory capacity (along with others) to help with the development of the ACC policy. Through the role in policy development, Hillsong Church was able to support the adoption of the ACC policy at the ACC National Conference held in April 2015. The adoption of the ACC policy and the approach taken known as 'ACC Safeguarding' formed a foundational step in the development of Hillsong Church's own approach to child protection.

Hillsong Church then undertook its own revision of its child protection policy and procedures. Initial development was undertaken internally with reference to other policies, regulatory guidelines, external training, and the Royal Commissions published document. In December 2015, the draft policy was given to an independent external consultant with considerable expertise in this field, Peter Barnett, of Safe Ministry Resources, to review and provide direction. Through this consultation it was considered that the scope of the policy could be broadened to encompass a more holistic approach to not only the protection of child and young people, but all of those who participate in Hillsong Church services and events. To achieve this the policy was further developed

to consider obligations under both the various state based child protection legislation and the *Work Health and Safety Act, 2011 (Cth)*. The policy was given the title of 'Safe Church Policy'.

There are several benefits of broadening the scope of the Policy. It enables the Church to enlarge the responsibility of child protection to all people related to Hillsong Church. Establishing 'shared responsibilities' with the broader church congregation, such as to take reasonable care of one's own self, take reasonable care to not adversely affect the well-being of others, and responding to reasonable instruction, supports the creation of safe environments for children. Also, establishing shared responsibilities such as acting on concerns, and knowing and reporting of harm provide clear expectations for those associated with Hillsong to follow.

The broadened scope enables the Church to define a clear allocation of duties between officers, workers, and those who hold the primary duty of care. This allows for a clear chain of responsibility for the protection of children and young people to be communicated and managed. Discipline of employees and volunteers can be more easily managed where there are clear delegations of responsibility.

There are benefits in having reporting of incidents and concerns being directed to one central office (i.e. Safe Church Office). Under certain legislation, Hillsong Church has responsibility to report instances of harm that are of a non-sexual nature against a child. By receiving the allegation centrally, organisational silos that may exist between the responsibilities for child protection and Work Health & Safety (WH&S) are overcome. Issues arising from an incident can be managed and reported effectively from both perspectives. Situational prevention is predicated on safe environments, which are created by not only strong child protection practices, but also effective WH&S practices.

By being provided under one succinct policy, it also assists with the effective communication of expectations to all those responsible. Hillsong has taken note of the issues, raised through the Royal Commission, of policy and procedure documentation that is overly complex and leads to ambiguity. In an environment where the workforce is predominately voluntary, clear and efficient methods of communication that are closely aligned with shared values are found to be most effective. As part of this consideration, a simpler vocabulary has been adopted, such as the use of the term 'harm' to describe all forms of abuse.

To support the outwork of the Safe Church Policy, a more robust range of procedures have been developed to support, in particular, the planning and conducting of investigations into concerns or disclosure of abuse. These procedures have been developed to capture the already established practices adopted by the Church and enhance areas where better practices have been identified.

Interconnected policies, procedures, and practices which support the protection of children and others is referred to as the 'Safe Church Framework'. To help various people within the Church to understand the Safe Church Framework, the document titled 'Hillsong Church Safe Church Framework Overview' (i.e. Doc ID 5-0-001) was developed.

To enable the effective implementation of the Safe Church Framework, the Safe Church Training Manual (i.e. Doc ID 5-2-001) has been developed in collaboration with Peter Barnett, Safe Ministry Resources. This document will be provided to all staff and volunteers within Hillsong Church. The manual contains the Safe Church Framework Overview, Safe Church Policy, and those procedures which are directly relevant to them. The full suite of procedures will also be made available within the intranet and database system.

Staff recruitment policy & procedures

Hillsong Church enhanced its processes for staff recruitment. This was in part necessitated by the introduction of the new Working With Children Check introduced by the Office of the Children's Guardian which were required to be completed by all volunteers working with children in NSW by March 2015. While this was already a significant undertaking, Hillsong Church decided that each volunteer working with children in NSW must reapply for the role through an improved recruitment process. The process previously required volunteers to complete an application declaring their suitability, complete a face-to-face interview, provide referees, and sign the Working With Children and Young People Code of Conduct (i.e. Doc ID 5-5-003). However, it was recognised that the process for completing reference checks was not standardised and no record was made of the responses provided. Under the new process, all reference checks were completed by dedicated staff using a standard questionnaire template, in which responses were recorded electronically and stored permanently.

As a result of the new processes and decision to re-recruit and screen NSW volunteers, in 2015 a total of:

- 2,621 new applications were processed
- 4,369 reference checks were completed
- 2,626 state based check verifications were received.

All workers in child-related roles who did not complete the new process were prohibited from performing their duties. They were marked in the database as 'not yet approved' which would prohibit them from being allocated to teams, and stop them from printing the sticker that they are required to wear on their person when volunteering.

As a result of the recruitment and screening process, Hillsong Church was able to provide written assurance to the NSW Office of the Children Guardian in September 2015, that all workers engaged in child-related work had obtained a Working With Children Check which had been verified, and that proper records had been kept.

At the same time as the NSW recruitment and screening activities were being conducted, a review of records of Working With Children checks for volunteers in other States were completed and uploaded into the centralised database. Going forward, all volunteers will need to reapply at the expiry of their relevant state based checks. The process for reapplication will be the same as for new volunteers.

Training and supervision of staff

The provision of training for staff and volunteers has been provided through staff and volunteer team information sessions, and provision of practical on-the-job training. Through the staff and volunteer team training sessions, topics such as adherence to codes of conducts, the effective handling of reports of concerns or allegations, and indicators of risk of harm, are discussed in detail.

Supervision of staff is provided by the employing Managers. Each volunteer is appointed to a Team Leader to provide supervision and support.

Since the hearings held in October 2014, staff directly involved in the protection of children have participated in the National Council of Churches, Building Resilience Safe As Churches Conference

and Australian Christian Churches, Child Safe Presenter Workshop Training. They have also actively engaged in information sharing of publications relevant to better practices and current events.

During the period of re-recruiting and screening of volunteers, training and information was provided to recruits and those responsible for administering the process.

With the commencement of the Safe Church Office, a greater emphasis will be placed on staff and volunteer training. Hillsong Church has collaborated with Peter Barnett, Safe Ministry Resources to provide training and training resources. As part of our commitment to the ACC, all accredited ministers and Board of Directors will be trained through the course before December 2016. It is expected that all current Hillsong staff and child-related workers will also have completed the course by March 2017. All new staff and volunteers will complete the course as part of their induction. The completion of the course will be recorded electronically and permanently stored.

In the provision of training, it is recognised that there will be a diverse range of participants with unique needs. Where possible one, or more, of either the training format, delivery or presenter may be modified to achieve the best learning outcomes. Hillsong also recognises the need for specialist training for staff working within the Safe Church Office, for which provision has been made with the NSW Ombudsman in August 2016.

Policy and procedures to document and respond to allegations of child sexual abuse

Hillsong Church's approach to responding to allegations have been updated and clearly documented. With the advent of the increased responsibilities to the NSW Ombudsman, procedures have been written for the planning and conducting of an investigation and other supporting processes. The new procedures responding to the report of a concern or allegation are largely based on the guidelines provided by the Ombudsman. The new procedures will be apply to the handling of all allegations, not just those received in NSW.

Redress policies and procedures

The provision of protection and care for the victims of child sexual abuse have been detailed within the procedure 5-3-017 Caring for People Following a Disclosure. The Church's response for care is based on the recommendations provided by the Royal Commission in the consultation paper titled '*Best Practice Principles in Responding to Complaints of Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Contexts*' under section 4.8 Provision of Support.

Hillsong Church acknowledges the release of the report by the Royal Commission titled 'Redress and Civil Litigation' and the recommendations provided within regarding the provision of redress for survivors of child abuse. At this point in time, the Hillsong Board of Directors has committed to a 'caring and appropriate response' to victims of abuse, although it is yet to formalise its position on redress. We note that the Federal and State/Territory governments are also considering their positions on the redress recommendations and that a national framework may be developed.

The communication of policies and procedures to the members of Hillsong Church

The policies and procedures have and will be made available to Hillsong staff and volunteers through the manuals and training provided. It should be noted that around one out of every four congregation members serves as a volunteer in some capacity, amounting to approximately 10,000 people. A copy of the new Safe Church Policy and Framework documentation will be offered and made available to any member of the Hillsong Church Australia congregation on request. A key

component of the Safe Church Policy is the policy statement and within it the 'shared responsibilities'. The shared responsibilities will be communicated and promoted to the church congregation to develop understanding and have a positive impact on culture. The Safe Church Office is also responsible for administering an email address and 1800 number for receiving concerns or allegations. These communication channels will also be promoted to the congregation.

Promote compliance with relevant policies and procedures

Promotion of compliance has been provided through documentation, such as codes of conduct and employment agreements. This has been reinforced with training provided by Executive Management and Managers.

Within the Safe Church Framework, the Safe Church Office is able to provide support to the various roles who have responsibilities for compliance with Church policies and procedures. Within the Safe Church Office, there are clearly defined roles with levels of supervision and accountability. Provision has been made for effectively managing grievances, discipline and termination, and conflicts of interest through the Safe Church Framework procedures.

3. What consultations were held, and what materials were considered, in the formulation of these policies and procedures?

During the ACC 'Child Protection Policy' and 'ACC Safeguarding' development, Hillsong became associated with Peter Barnett, Safe Ministry Resources (SMR). SMR played a formative role in the further development of Hillsong Church's approach to child protection, and continues to play a role in the provision of training materials and ad-hoc advisory support.

Another formative role in the development of the Hillsong Church's new policy and procedures resulted from the introduction of the NSW Ombudsman in May 2015. Through a meeting with Steve Kinmond, Deputy Ombudsman, it was explained that a change in interpretation of legislation would likely include Hillsong Church in the scope of the Ombudsman's oversight. Since then Hillsong Church has adopted the obligation to notify the Ombudsman of reportable conduct within NSW, and developed its processes to effectively manage these obligations.

During the formulation of the policy and procedures consideration was given to the extent that, subject to local laws, uniform policies and procedures could be recommended or adopted in Hillsong Churches operating internationally. In particular we consulted with and sought comments from a senior Australian qualified solicitor who, for many years, during practice in Australia, advised churches and schools on such issues. Presently residing and working in the United Kingdom he has, for more than five years, been responsible for the review and management of similar policies and procedures in churches in England.

Other consultations were held with internal stakeholders of Hillsong Church. The primary consultation was with the Board of Directors, Audit Risk & Compliance Committee, General Manager, Head of Safe Church Office, Head of Human Resource, Pastoral Care personnel, and Safe Church Office personnel.

The documents have also been subject to review by external legal counsel.

4. What impediments did, or does, Hillsong Church face in implementing these policies and procedures and any other reforms? What are the proposed measures to overcome these impediments?

Hillsong Church currently operates in five states and territories within Australia. Within each, there are significant differences in the requirements to obtain working with children checks and the obligations to reporting concerns, allegations, or incidents of child sexual abuse. In the last few years, there has been significant changes with the implementation of new legislation and regulatory requirements, principally within New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. Beyond this, there have been a proliferation of important publications describing better practices and principles. During this time, the ACC have also been reviewing their own approach to child protection and response to incidents of abuse, which Hillsong Church wish to be aligned with. Meanwhile, the issues of domestic family violence, and serious mental health are becoming more prevalent. In this volatile environment, the role of Hillsong Church, as an advocate for its congregation's welfare and well-being, can at times seem extremely complex, often ambiguous and increasingly uncertain.

Hillsong Church welcomes the role the Royal Commission has played, and continues to, in seeking a definitive approach to child protection and response to incidents of child sexual abuse. Hillsong Church would like to see through proposed reforms a national approach to working with children checks, the obligations for reporting, and redress for victims of abuse. It is also looking forward to the proposed recommendations from the Royal Commission in relation to sexual abuse where a child is the perpetrator.

In considering what a national approach should look like, from Hillsong's perspective, there are a number of comparisons that can be made between the state based government agencies. The distinct advantages some agencies have over others include:

- the ability to communicate through electronic forms of written communication (i.e. emails, etc.) rather than letters
- provision of automatic notification to the employer when a worker's WWC check has been expired or revoked
- provision of one state-wide contact number for reporting children at risk rather than by region
- provision of a mechanism for making an 'initial notification' and further direction and support through the remainder of the investigation, such as the NSW Ombudsman.

From Hillsong Church's perspective, the government agencies support provided in NSW is superior to other states or territories in which it operates. It is the state which has the most onerous reporting requirements, and yet is also the easiest to administer, and provides the most support, in particular from the NSW Ombudsman.

In the meantime, Hillsong recognises that within the volatile environment, there is a responsibility to provide a consistent and effective approach to the handling of allegations of abuse. It considers that the requirements are beyond those who carry other responsibilities, including our pastoral staff. Hillsong has recognised the need for a centralised team whose role is dedicated solely to this task. The Safe Church Office provides the Hillsong congregation and workers with simple and effective systems and training for the receiving of concerns or disclosures. The Safe Church Office is then responsible to manage the complexity and adapt quickly with changes in legislative requirements and better practice.

In establishing the Safe Church Office, the Executive Management has provided an appropriate level of focus and support, along with the adequate resourcing to bring about the required changes.

5. Please provide detailed responses as to how, if at all, the Hillsong Church has addressed the following matters:

- a. responding to the issues identified by its child protection 'gap analysis' completed in or around October 2014
- b. developing a formal policy to identify and manage conflicts of interest when responding to allegations of child sexual abuse
- c. having a disciplinary process for perpetrators of child sexual abuse and reporting the outcomes of completed disciplinary processes to the New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People
- d. establishing policy and procedure for the referral of allegations of child sexual abuse to the police, including those of an historical nature.

Responding to the issues identified by its child protection 'gap analysis' completed in or around October 2014

During the hearing in October 2014, a response was provided to questions requested by the Royal Commission. The response highlighted some gaps in policy which the Church had observed and were actively addressing. The gaps have since been addressed and should be noted in the documentation provided as part of this submission. To assist with this, the following table has been prepared to explain the gaps and where they have been addressed.

Previous Gaps	Refer to
Hillsong's obligations in NSW as a 'reporting body' to the NSW Children's Guardian needs to be described	5-1-001 Safe Church Policy, section 6.4
The new Working With Children Check requirements in NSW, which have been explained in the current Hillsong application forms, have to be explained in the current policy and procedure manual	5-1-001 Safe Church Policy, section 6.3 5-3-001 Recruitment & Selection for Child-Related Roles
The specification of child abuse as a 'criminal offence' needs to be clearly stated and explained	5-1-001 Safe Church Policy, section 6.4 5-2-001 Hillsong Safe Church Training Manual, section
An explanation is needed of the reporting responsibilities under s316 of the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)	5-1-001 Safe Church Policy, section 6.4 5-2-001 Hillsong Safe Church Training Manual
Processes for keeping records of allegations and their handling in a standardised format needs to be stated	5-3-019 Keeping Records
Specification of minimum requirements for staff and volunteers of initial and ongoing Child Protection training including the handling of complaints handling needs to be stated	5-0-001 Safe Church Framework Overview, under heading 'Element 6: Training and Monitoring' 5-3-002 Induction and Training
A formalisation of a conflict of interest policy	5-3-020 Conflicts of Interest

It should be noted that all the gaps have been addressed within the Safe Church Framework, but not all have been specifically addressed in the Safe Church Policy document. The reason for this is that the policy document would become too extensive if each of the different states and territory requirements were provided. Also, it was considered that other documents would be more suitable to explain these requirements.

Developing a formal policy to identify and manage conflicts of interest when responding allegations of child sexual abuse

A key reason for establishing the Safe Church Office was to enable the effective management of the risk of actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Allegations are directed to be made to the Safe Church Office who are responsible for planning and conducting an investigation. The results of the investigation are reported to the Head of Agency who is responsible for making a finding.

To further support this function, a procedure has been put in place titled 5-3-020 Conflicts of Interest. The procedure provides that any conflicts arising with the Head of Safe Church should be referred to either the Head of Agency or chair of the Audit Risk & Compliance Committee.

Having a disciplinary process for perpetrators of child sexual abuse and reporting the outcomes of completed disciplinary processes to the New South Wales Commission for Children and Young People

The disciplinary process for perpetrators of child sexual abuse who are workers of Hillsong Church has been explained in the procedure 5-3-018 Discipline and Termination. The process for reporting the completed disciplinary action have been explained in procedure 5-3-016 Reporting a Finding of Misconduct or Abuse.

Establishing policy and procedure for the referral of allegations of child sexual abuse to the police, including those of an historical nature.

The process for reporting all allegations of child sexual abuse to the police, including those of an historical nature, have been explained in procedures:

- 5-3-012 Receiving a Concern or Disclosure of Harm
- 5-3-013 Planning and Conducting an Investigation
- 5-3-016 Reporting a Finding of Misconduct or Abuse.

With each of the matters addressed through better documentation, Hillsong Church recognises the need for improved training. This will be facilitated by the Safe Church Office using the Safe Church Training Manual and other resources provided.

6. *Have allegations of child sexual abuse been received by the Hillsong Church since Case Study 18? If so, please record the following in respect to each allegation in the enclosed Microsoft Excel spreadsheet:*
- a. *nature of the alleged sexual abuse*
 - b. *date and period of alleged sexual abuse*
 - c. *gender and age of alleged perpetrator(s) and victim*
 - d. *the internal assessment and investigation report(s) by Hillsong Church and associated bodies*

- e. report(s) made to an authorised department and/or law enforcement agency and/or any other agency by Hillsong Church about those allegations*
- f. whether the victim sought any form of redress*
- g. whether the victim was offered any form of redress*
- h. whether a legal claim has resulted from the alleged sexual abuse*
- i. what policies and procedures were followed in responding to the allegation*
- j. whether disciplinary actions were undertaken*
- k. feedback from survivors and their families regarding Hillsong Church's response to the allegation.*

Hillsong Church confirms that allegations of child sexual abuse have been received since the hearing of Case 18. The details of these allegations have been prepared in the format prescribed by the Commission, and has been provided in a separate submission so as to enable the protection of confidential information. It should be noted that none of the allegations since the hearings in Case Study 18 have related to a Hillsong Pastor or any other Hillsong employee.

The information in this document and the supporting documents are provided on the basis that letters patent from Her Excellency the Governor of New South Wales declared section 17 of the Royal Commission Act 1923 (NSW) to apply, and the letter patent from Her Excellency the Governor General do not exclude section 6 DD of the Royal Commission Act 1902 (Cth) as it applies to any document produced or answer given to any question to the Royal Commission.

The written response and supporting documentation has been prepared by Kirk Morton, Risk and Compliance Coordinator, and Keith Ainge, Head of Safe Church Office, in consultation with other Hillsong staff and nominated advisors, under the supervision of George Aghajanian, General Manager. The responses to each question provided in this letter and the supporting documents provided, as described in Annexure A, is one of two submissions. A second submission will be provided separately containing the response to question 6.

Yours Faithfully



George Aghajanian

General Manager



Keith Ainge

Head of Safe Church Office

Annexure A - Supporting Documents Register

Document ID	Document Title	Page Ref
	Hillsong Safe Church Policy and Framework -	
5-0-001	Hillsong Safe Church Framework Overview	1
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