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LETTER FROM BISHOP FARRAN dated 18/7/12
TO JUSTICE PETER YOUNG (CHANCELLOR)
Regarding DEPOSITION OF STURT/LAWRENCE/HOARE/
DUNCAN
AND
PROPOSED CHANGES to the professional
Standards ordinance in 2012 Drafted by
Bishop Peter Stuart

18 July 2012

CONFIDENTIAL

The Hon Peter Young
The Chancellor
The Diocese of Newcastle

Dear Peter,

I would appreciate your considered advice on two matters before you and Pam take your much awaited trip at the end of July.

First, I have now received the report from the Board in relation to the Reverend Bruce Hoare. Accompanying this report was a transcript of statements from the informant which could be described as a Victim Impact Statement.

I am now considering carefully my options in relation to the priests whose conduct has been reviewed by the Professional Standards Board and about whom I have received a recommendation. The Board has found the priests unfit for further ministry and recommended in each case that I depose them from Holy Orders. The import of the Board's findings is that these priests should never be able to function as priests again in the Anglican Church of Australia.

I am aware that amongst the range of penalties that a Bishop can impose following a Diocesan Tribunal include a prohibition from functioning and that the Professional Standards Ordinance 2005 also makes provision for prohibition orders. I am further aware that following the adoption of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003, the Church of England no longer provides for deposition and only uses prohibition orders (including lifetime prohibition) unlike the Australian Church. I have attached the penalty guidance from the Church of England which provides a succinct view of the thinking in that church.

What would be the ramifications if I were to make a determination in these matters other than deposition and are there steps that I could take to minimise the impact of those ramifications?

You will be aware that I have not finalised my thinking in this matter but I am seeking information about the options available to me.

I propose, following your advice, to write to the respondents to ask them whether they wish to put anything to me in writing before I make my determination. I then propose to meet with the President of the Board to outline my proposed actions and hear any advice that he may wish to give me. Could you advise me as to any further steps or alternative steps I should be taking?

Secondly, you have received from Bishop Peter a draft Professional Standards Ordinance Amendment Ordinance 2012. I would appreciate your advice on any amendments to the draft and your advice on your implications within the Diocese or nationally of giving my assent to such an Ordinance.

Grace and peace