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**Details:**

Bishop Farnan report to Diocesan Council  
undated regarding Professional Standards  
(late 2010)

### **Diocesan Administration**

I have discussed with the Diocesan Business Manager the urgent need to develop a Diocesan Council Policy manual. I remain surprised that policies which the Diocesan Council may have formulated over the years are not codified and easily accessible for constant reference. My experience from the Diocese of Perth was that such a manual was essential to keep abreast of the policy development and to ensure that policies were implemented and practised.

In addition to this requirement is the further administrative need for the functions of a Registrar to be fulfilled within Diocesan Administration. It has become clear to me that this is weakness in the Diocesan administration. I have become increasingly cautious as to whether administrative processes undertaken accord with the Ordinances. The issue of the appointment process for the Director of Professional Standards is a consequence of the members of the Diocesan Council at the time (including me as the Chair) not being fully across the detail of the Ordinance.

We have an office staff that are fundamentally unchurched and for whom the culture of the Anglican Church and its government is not familiar. There are information seminars for the Diocesan Staff but these take time to build up the necessary cumulative effect of familiarity with the culture of Anglican Church administration. There has also been a significant staff turn-over which robs the Office of a corporate memory and even the development of such a functioning corporate memory. The saga of the 2009 Synod minutes was a potent instance of this issue.

A further issue is the unwieldy content of the Diocesan Law Book. The Law Book requires radical editing so that only operant ordinances are the content. An historical repository of ordinances could be maintained separately from the working copies of the Law Book needed by Diocesan personnel.

I have proposed to the Diocesan Business Manager that it is imperative that the internal duties of a Registrar be focused on a suitably qualified person. Negotiations for such an appointment are in train as I write this report.

### **Archdeacon Copeman**

Archdeacon Copeman will move to Newcastle in February 2011 to become the Archdeacon for Ministry Support (0.5) and to prepare to plant a church in the Newcastle area. The Archdeacon is funding himself in the church planting venture. I happily accepted the Archdeacon's offer because I believe that the time is opportune for this Diocese to begin planting churches that are green-field faith communities. Other denominations and another diocese undertake such planting regularly. I consider that a senior priest undertaking this work will offer great encouragement to the whole Diocese and show a way forward in establishing new parishes.

### **Province of New South Wales**

The Standing Committee of the Provincial Synod met in Sydney for a morning on Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The more creative aspect of this rather perfunctory meeting was the planning for the Provincial Synod meeting in the form of a workshop and the ventilation of issues that might be addressed at that gathering.

The Provincial Bishops met at Bishops Court, the home of the Archbishop, and shared issues facing their dioceses as well as being briefed on the trial ethics programme in some New South Wales public schools.

The Anglican Bishops were joined by some of the Roman Catholic Bishops for a meeting that discussed the recent canonization of Mary MacKillop (Saint Mary of the Cross) in Rome, the issue of

the ethics course and the impending public debate about euthanasia. We then had dinner together, said Compline in the Archbishop's Chapel and Bishop Peter and I drove back to Newcastle.

### **Diocesan Council Budget**

The Diocesan Business Manager will guide us through the Budget referred to the Diocesan Council for adoption by the Synod. Doubtless he will draw to the Diocesan Council's attention the cost to the budget of supporting Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College. This drain upon us is another stage of the fall-out from poor governance and leadership of that college.

We cannot afford any further issues with the Diocesan Schools and I believe that the NASC (as it is doing) must continue to keep a very close watchful eye on Manning Valley Anglican College governance. I intend to ensure much closer ties with MVAC Board through my two appointments to it that must be made before December 31.

### **Professional Standards**

The Diocese is facing a horrid period of historical professional standards issues that continue to emerge. Not only are there new allegations but there are emerging questions as to how allegations have been dealt with by the Diocese in the past. This may eventuate to be a serious issue of credibility for the Diocese.

I want to make a statement to the Diocesan Council responding to issues raised at the September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Diocesan Council.

In the discussion at the September 30<sup>th</sup> concerning the operation of Professional Standards processes within the Diocese there may have been given inadvertently impressions of concern. I wish to address some of these and reassure you of the integrity of the operations of Professional Standards within the Diocese.

The location of the Director of Professional Standards was raised as a concern. This is a matter that is considered carefully by every Diocese with some Dioceses incorporating the Director closely with the Diocesan Offices and some having the Director located at different offices.

The Director and his part-time administrative assistant are located in offices on the first floor of Bishop Housden House. A person wishing to see the Professional Standards Director can meet him without coming to reception as there is a waiting area on the first floor. The offices have separate locks which are not known to other Diocesan personnel. The computer system is separately firewalled.

Operationally, Diocesan Officers and I only see the DPS when by request in our offices. His location on the first floor is sufficiently disconnected from the third floor Diocesan Office to ensure that the DPS works independently and is able to offer confidential engagement with complainants and respondents.

The second issue raised was that the administrative assistant is related to a member of the Diocesan Office staff. This is correct.

However, this appointment was made by an interviewing panel that consisted of an external person well versed in professional standards matters. The other assurance is that the administrative staff person has signed a confidentiality agreement. I think these are sufficient guarantees of the independence of the operation of the Professional Standards Director.

The third issue related to the appointment of the Professional Standards Director. The Professional Standards Director has a contract with the Diocese and we must be careful to ensure that we always act as good employers.

As I indicated in answer to a question in Synod, the October 2007 Meeting of Diocesan Council carried this motion:

**Director of Professional Standards**

Moved Mr J Cleary Seconded Mr J Price

That the Diocesan Council authorizes the Diocesan Business Manager to make this Appointment.

Those present at that meeting of the Diocesan Council were:

The Bishop, Bishop Graeme Rutherford, His Hon Judge J Lincoln (Chancellor), Dean Graeme Lawrence, Mr J Cleary, Archdeacon Simpson, Canons S Benson, P Robertson, S Roulston, The Reverends H Bright, A Copeman, M Davies, B Pate, S Pullin, and Messers W Allen, A Green, J Helman, J Price, C Shevels and Mrs B Fenwick and Mrs R Brand.

The above members included the Chancellor, The Diocesan Solicitor, the Chair and Deputy Chair of Committees.

The recruitment process for the position of Director of Professional standards was thorough and comprised a panel consisting of the former Chair of the PSC, the clerical member of the PSC at the time, the former Professional Standards Director at the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and the Diocesan Business Manager. Three of these people were members of the Diocesan Council at the time.

Following the intensive recruitment campaign, they recommended the appointment of Michael to me. At the time, partnerships were also discussed with me with respect to a joint initiative with the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle under our covenant.

The issue of independence of the Professional Standards Director is crucial. The media scrutiny of the Diocesan practice of Professional Standards will only increase and become more interrogatory. This climate will not dissipate in the near future.

What we have now in practice overcomes the inadequacies of practice in the past. The previous practices were far too 'in-house'. This is an issue that The Herald is publicly scrutinizing and about which it is raising questions.

The Diocesan Council in its oversight given to it by the Professional Standards Ordinance 2005 (as amended) has to be careful that it will not be perceived as compromising the integrity of the Professional Standards Ordinance and its proper practice. The experience of the Church is that we have needed to learn better how to respond to people who have been hurt within the midst of the Church. I know this because I have been the one to hear the stories and to apologize on behalf of the Diocese of Newcastle.

The agenda for this meeting provides the Diocesan Council with the opportunity to receive the report from the Professional Standards Committee in relation to the recommendations from the Parkinson Report and to hear from the Chair of the PSC, Mr Geoff Spring.

**Bishop Stuart**

Bishop Peter will take some Long Service Leave in December with the add-on of annual leave and will be absent from the Diocese December 10<sup>th</sup> – January 26<sup>th</sup>. The Stuarts will be travelling in

England and Europe. It should be a marvellous time for Bishop Peter, Nicki, Ben and Rebekah. We wish them every blessing for a safe and refreshing tour.

I have arranged for Bishop Peter to attend a professional development programme for new bishops held at Canterbury Cathedral. The course is from February 1-9 2011.

I understand that two other Australian bishops will also undertake the course, Bishop Barbara Darling from Melbourne and Bishop John Stead from Bathurst.

**Commissionings:**

Please pray for Stephen Bloor commissioned as the Priest-in-Charge of Bateau Bay at S. Christopher's Church Bateau Bay on Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> at **7pm** and Adele and Jasmine as they settle into their new home.

Please pray for Canon Sonia Roulston to be commissioned as the Rector of Morpeth in S. James Church Morpeth on Thursday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at **7pm**.

Please pray for Terry Frewin to be commissioned as the Chaplain to Anglican Care in the Chapel at Booragul on Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at **2pm**.

Please pray for Doug Morrison-Cleary to be commissioned as Priest-in-Charge of New Lambton parish in All Saints Church New Lambton on Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at **7pm**. Please also pray for their safe travel from Minnesota to Newcastle and especially for Jenny's comfort and safety.

**Ordination to the Priesthood:**

There will be one ordination service in Christ Church Cathedral on the night of Saint Andrew's Day (November 30<sup>th</sup>) at 7.30p.m. The Retreat Conductor and Preacher will be the Bishop of the Northern Territory, Bishop Greg Thompson.

The Retreat is at Bishopscourt.

Please pray for those to be ordained: Barbara Bagley, Don Grace, Jess Grant, Helen Holiday, Wally Jarvis, and Alison Wooden.

**Christmass:**

Robin and I would like to extend hospitality at Bishopscourt to you and yours at the next meeting of the Diocesan Council on Thursday December 16<sup>th</sup>. I will be inviting the Trustees to join us.

The Diocesan Council will meet a 4.30pm and adjourn at 6.30pm to gather at Bishopscourt for 7pm.

**+Brian Newcastle.**