

The Salvation Army Australia

National Professional Standards Council

Preamble

The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory and The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory (The Salvation Army) have agreed to jointly convene the “National Professional Standards Council” (NPSC) – to ensure, among other things, that abuse such as occurred in the children’s homes run by The Salvation Army in Australia pre-1990’s should never happen again.

Purpose

The NPSC will:

1. Provide a national perspective in respect to all matters pertaining to issues of child sexual abuse and all other forms of abuse.
 2. Co-ordinate a national approach to the development of policies, principles, procedures and other resources necessary to promote ministry and service practices for children, vulnerable adults and all people accessing Salvation Army services.
 3. Work to provide a world’s best practice response to allegations of abuse
 4. Co-ordinate the response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) and various other State based inquiries into abuse within religious and other organisations
 5. Consider and respond to any related matters as it considers appropriate.
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Overriding Principles

1. Through the establishment of the NPSC, The Salvation Army will respond to the issue of child abuse and all other forms of abuse within it in an open, honest and transparent manner.
 2. It is committed to working with survivors of abuse to assist them in their recovery, and
 3. Doing everything reasonably possible to ensure that current service methodologies conform to world’s best practice for ensuring the safety of those in its care, especially the young and vulnerable.
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Functions

The NSPC will:

1. Consider all matters relating to professional standards, safe ministry

and services practices and the training, care and support of all personnel who work in these areas.

2. Examine the professional standards resources and policies used in both Australian territories to ensure that they meet the highest possible standards in order to provide as far as possible a safe environment for those accessing TSA services.
3. Recommend the commissioning of new or additional national resources as appropriate.
4. Create standards that can be applied in every setting in Australia, with understanding of the various State requirements.
5. Ensure that standards and policies are maintained, applied seamlessly and without exception.
6. Work to harmonise the responses of both territories to survivors of abuse, ensuring that just compensation and adequate pastoral care is provided and seeking reconciliation where appropriate.
7. Harmonise disciplinary processes and a National Officers Review Board procedure for dealing with sexual offences as well as allegations of other forms of abuse.
8. Receive regular reports from the territories detailing incidents of abuse, compensation payments made and other relevant statistical data as determined by the NPSC.
9. Regularly report back to the territories its findings and recommendations.
10. Monitor the work of the Royal Commission with a view to identifying any lessons to be learned which can be incorporated into national policies and procedures, and which may have wider application to The Salvation Army internationally.
11. Initiate joint submissions or responses to any issues papers or recommendations from the Royal Commission.
12. Develop protocols to ensure that there is a co-ordinated national media/public relations response to all issues related to abuse.
13. Monitor national and international initiatives in the area of professional standards in faith-based and other relevant organisations, with a view to applying any learnings.
14. Commission research or co-opt expert assistance to carry out particular work as needed from time to time.
15. Develop a transfer of information protocol to limit the opportunity for offenders to establish themselves in positions of trust within either territory.
16. Recommend to the territorial commanders of the two Australian territories, for approval and adoption, policies and procedures in all

matters pertaining to professional standards.

Membership

1. Membership of the NPSC will be approved by the General of The Salvation Army on an annual basis.
 2. The Chair of the NPSC will be one of the two territorial commanders in Australia, as appointed by the General. The Vice-Chair will be the other territorial commander in Australia, also appointed by the General. After this initial appointment, the Chairmanship shall rotate between the territorial commanders on an annual basis.
 3. The Chair will guide the meeting according to the agenda and the time available, and will ensure that all business items end with a decision, action or definite outcome.
 4. Subject always to clause 1. the NPSC membership is as follows:
 - a. Territorial Commander AUE
 - b. Territorial Commander AUS
 - c. Secretary for Personnel from each territory
 - d. Professional Standards Unit Manager/Director of each territory
 - e. Legal representative from each territory
 - f. Territorial Program Secretary or Royal Commission Response Co-ordinator from each territory.
 - g. A communications/media representative from each territory.
 - h. IS for SPEA (Ex officio)
 5. The NPSC may invite any representative from within a territorial or divisional department or an external organisation or body as deemed necessary to provide input to an agenda item.
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Secretary

The NPSC Secretary (who may be a non-member) will be appointed by the Chair, and will prepare and maintain agendas and minutes of meetings.

Meeting Agenda

1. A common NPSC agenda will be established and structured around the functions of the council listed in Section 3 above.
2. The agenda will allow for the tabling of reports from the Professional Standards Units of both territories and other regular reports as required (eg. Communications, Royal Commission.)
3. It is expected that the agenda and agenda papers will be distributed

to members no later than one week prior to the NPSC meeting.

Meeting Minutes

1. All NPSC meetings will be minuted using a format reflective of the common agenda.
 2. It is expected that Minutes of a meeting will be circulated to members no later than one week following the close of meeting. Action items will be included with the Minutes.
 3. Minutes of the prior meeting will be ratified as a true and accurate record of that meeting at the commencement of each NPSC meeting and will be signed by the Chair.
 4. Provide regular minutes of meetings and liaise closely with the SPEA Zonal Office in all matters pertaining to the NPSC.
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Quorum

A quorum of seven (7) members must be present before the meeting can proceed, no fewer than three members from each territory. The chair or vice-chair must be present for a meeting to proceed.

Frequency and Place of Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly, with dates and place of meeting to be set annually in advance

Membership Responsibility

NPSC members must:

1. Provide an apology to the Secretary for non-attendance due to furlough, leave or other reasons, no later than one week before the meeting;
 2. Read the agenda and attachments prior to the meeting;
 3. Discuss matters in an open, frank and courteous manner.
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Amendments

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary by the NPSC Chair, and subject to the approval of the respective territories' Policy Councils.
