



UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA  
**ASSEMBLY**

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28 July 2017

Ms Anna Tydd  
Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse  
GPO Box 5283  
Sydney NSW 2001

**By Email: [anna.tydd@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au](mailto:anna.tydd@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au)**

Hi Anna,

In response to your question of 25 July, it would be correct to say that there may be complaints relating to institutions affiliated with the Uniting Church which are not detailed in the data provided to the Royal Commission because the relevant institution may have recorded and responded to the allegation independent of the relevant Synod.

*“The Church is a diverse and wide spread organisation with inter-related national, state, regional and local structures”<sup>1</sup>. “Across Australia... particular missional considerations result in different approaches to governance”<sup>2</sup> between the Synods and the institutions.*

Because of the nature of the Church’s inter-conciliar form of government, Synods have the authority to make their own governance arrangements with institutions.<sup>3</sup>*“The agencies connected to the Uniting Church ...[vary]... in size, structure, service delivery models, levels of funding and governance”<sup>4</sup>, further “there are 64 schools which operate independently of the Synods and whose day to day governance is overseen by School Councils and Boards...”<sup>5</sup>* The relationship between schools and Synods was best illustrated in Case Study 23.<sup>6</sup>

Although differing governance requirements exist between the Synods and the institutions as defined by an institution’s constitution or governing document<sup>7</sup>, *“each of the agencies and schools operates in a regulated environment”<sup>8</sup> with prescriptive regulatory requirements<sup>9</sup> that sees all allegations proactively reported<sup>10</sup>.*

It is for the above reasons that although institutions are affiliated with the Uniting Church that incidents may not be detailed in the data provided to the Royal Commission.

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 19, First Joint Statement of Stuart McMillan and Colleen Geyer, Case Study 56

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 113, First Joint Statement of Stuart McMillan and Colleen Geyer, Case Study 56

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 115, First Joint Statement of Stuart McMillan and Colleen Geyer, Case Study 56

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 18, Statement of Anne Cross, Case Study 56

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph 20, Statement of Anne Cross, Case Study 56

<sup>6</sup> See for example Paragraph 117, First Joint Statement of Stuart McMillan and Colleen Geyer, Case Study 56

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>8</sup> Paragraph 15, Statement of Anne Cross, Case Study 56

<sup>9</sup> Paragraph 16, Statement of Anne Cross, Case Study 56

<sup>10</sup> See for example Paragraph 63, Statement of Anne Cross, Case Study 56

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Cox', written in a cursive style.

Rev John Cox  
Executive Officer  
Uniting Church Royal Commission National Task Group