



# Anglican Church of Australia

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## General Synod

### **Section 1: Identifying the institutions**

#### **The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia**

Location: 189 Kent Street, Sydney, NSW 2000

Contact Officer: Ms Anne Hywood, General Secretary

Organisational Category: Religious Institution

#### **Background and contextual information**

The Anglican Church of Australia (ACA) operates under a decentralised structure and its core units of organisation are 23 geographically defined dioceses. The church structure also includes Anglican schools, community service organisations, mission agencies, and parachurch organisations, operating within dioceses, with varying degrees of autonomy.

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia was constituted in 1961. The General Synod functions as a forum for the 23 Dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia to consider and determine matters in the affairs of the Church.

The 1961 Constitution gives the General Synod wide plenary powers and the ability to create national legislation. However, General Synod legislation declared to affect 'order and good government' in a diocese or the property of a diocese have no effect in a diocese until adopted by ordinance of that diocese. Resolutions of General Synod are not binding on a diocese.

Given this governance structure each diocese has responsibility for the development, adoption and implementation of child protection policies and procedures within their jurisdiction. Each autonomous school, agency and organisation has a similar responsibility.

Since the late 1990's the General Synod has initiated the development and promotion of national models, standards and benchmarks in the area of child protection, abuse complaints management and responding to survivors of abuse.

The lead entity with this responsibility is the General Synod's Safe Ministry Commission (SMC).

The function of the Safe Ministry Commission is:

- a) to examine questions of professional standards, safe ministry practices and training, the protection of children and adults from abuse, and care and support for ordained and authorised lay ministry, referred to it by the Primate, the Standing Committee or the General Synod, and to report thereon to the referring party and the Standing Committee;

- b) to make recommendations to the Standing Committee on matters relating to professional standards, safe ministry practices and training, the protection of children and adults from abuse, and care and support for ordained and authorised lay ministry.

The Safe Ministry Commission has guided the development of a consistent, national approach to matters relating to child safety and complaints handling through its recommendations to the General Synod and the General Synod Standing Committee and has oversight of the ACA's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse.

In September 2017, the General Synod passed the [Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017](#) which provides national standards in areas of church worker screening, selection and training, the adoption of a consistent code of conduct and risk management strategies for persons of concern. The Canon includes provisions for an external audit of performance against the national standards.

At December 2018, 18 of 23 dioceses of the ACA had adopted the Canon with the remaining dioceses to consider adoption in 2019.

National policies and resources relating to child protection are publicly available on the General Synod website at [ACA Safer Churches](#).

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## **Section 2: General reporting against recommendations relevant to all institutions**

<b>THEME 1: Making institutions child safe</b>
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<b>Measure 1.1: New or revised Code of Conduct, policies and procedures for child safe institutions.</b>
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**Report Volume:**

(Volumes 6 and Volume 7)

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

(Recommendations 6.6, 7.8)

- all staff and volunteers comply with a Code of Conduct that sets behavioural standards towards children, explains reporting requirements and handling complaints of child sexual abuse
- requires all people working within the institution to undergo initial and periodic training of the Code of Conduct, and
- ongoing documentation of policies and procedures related to child safe standards.

<b>Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018</b>
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**Code of Conduct:**

*"Faithfulness in Service"* - A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers was approved by the General Synod in 2004 and

promoted to all dioceses for adoption. The current version is available on the General Synod website at [Faithfulness in Service](#).

Dioceses which have adopted the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 are required to comply with the standards and guidelines of Faithfulness in Service so far as they relate to children (Section 5).

It is acknowledged that Anglican schools and community services agencies may require additional inclusions in their code of conduct, due to local jurisdictional regulations. The Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 confirms Faithfulness in Service as the prescribed code of conduct for a Church body subject to the Canon, unless an application is made for approval of an alternative.

In 2010 the Standing Committee approved a document describing the expectations for behaviour in our Church communities and to complement Faithfulness in Service. [Being Together](#) is a statement of expectations for members of Church communities.

### **Policies and Procedures for Child Safe Institutions:**

The Safe Ministry Commission and its predecessors, the Child Protection Committee (from 1998) and the Professional Standards Commission (from 2004), has consistently developed and promoted policies and procedures relating to child protection in the following areas:

#### Prevention of Abuse:

- Promoting Standards of Behaviour; Code of conduct
- Safe Ministry Training Benchmarks
- Screening and selection of clergy and church workers
- National Register (Record of complaints)

These are published on the General Synod Website at:

<https://www.anglican.org.au/prevention>

#### Response to Abuse:

- Pastoral Care and Assistance Principles (Redress)
- Handling Complaints
- Responding to persons of concern

These are published on the General Synod Website at:

<https://www.anglican.org.au/response>

Individual dioceses, schools and agencies have either adopted the national models or have implemented standards of their own.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure**

#### **Code of Conduct:**

Ongoing review and amendment of “Faithfulness in Service” and “Being Together”.

## **Policies and Procedures for Child Safe Institutions.**

Ongoing review, amendment and promotion of national model policies and resources.

Ongoing review of national standards provided in the *Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017*.

Independent audit requirement to come into effect on 1 January 2019.

### **Measure 1.2: Improvements to institutional responding and reporting**

(Volume 7) (Recommendation 7.7 and 7.8)

- there is an effective complaint handling policy and procedure in place that sets out how the institutions should respond to complaints of child sexual abuse, and is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families
- if a complaint is made, there is a risk assessment framework followed immediately and appropriate discipline of any internal perpetrators or decision-making of staff on allegations undergoing investigation.

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

In 2004, the General Synod approved a model professional standards ordinance to cover disciplinary processes in relation to complaints of sexual misconduct and child abuse against clergy. Most dioceses have passed ordinances along these lines, some adopting the model ordinance without modification, others with varying degrees of modification.

All dioceses have appointed a Director of Professional Standards with responsibility for coordinating the response and investigation of complaints of the abuse. Information on making a complaint is made available in church operational locations and on diocesan websites.

Individual schools and agencies have either adopted the national model or have implemented standards of their own.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure**

The Royal Commission noted that there are a range of professional standards and complaints management processes adopted across the ACA.

The General Synod in 2017 requested the Safe Ministry Commission to develop recommendations for a nationally consistent professional standards process across the ACA.

**Measure 1.3:  
Improvements to recordkeeping and information sharing**

**(Volume 8) (Recommendations 8.1 and 8.4)**

- institutions should implement the Royal Commission's principles for records and recordkeeping that responds to child sexual abuse occurring within institutions

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

In 2007, the General Synod passed the National Register Canon 2007 which provided for the establishment of the National Register and four protocols for its implementation.

The National Register is an essential part of the Church's response to the prevention of child abuse and adult sexual misconduct. The Canon provides for a national, transparent and accountable process to ensure appropriate checks are made before all ordinations, licences or appointments are made.

The Directors of Professional Standards in all dioceses are required to enter relevant information into the National Register. Currently this information does not extend to persons working in affiliated institutions in all dioceses.

The National Register contains only information primarily pertaining to complaints or findings of child abuse and adult sexual misconduct as well as adverse findings against or adverse admissions made by clergy or lay people within the Church.

Details about the operation of the National Register may be found in the National Register Canon 2007. Operational instructions for handling of information on the National Register (input, inquiries, access and disclosure) are provided for in a series of protocols.

This information is provided on the [National Register](#) page on the General Synod website.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to consult with Anglicare Australia and Anglican Schools Australia and prepare: a) a policy in relation to whether the scope of the National Register Canon 2007 should be extended to cover officers, employees and volunteers of all Anglican Church of Australia institutions; and if appropriate, b) any amendments of the National Register Canon 2007 proposed to give effect to this policy.

## **THEME 2: Children's Voices**

### **Measure 2.1:**

#### **Children participate in decisions that affect them (All relevant volumes and recommendations)**

- information about how children are able to express their views and how their voices have been incorporated into child safe practices, including the design of policy and decision-making

#### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

To date the ACA's experience of complaints of sexual abuse has been primarily responding to and supporting adult survivors of abuse. For that reason, policies and procedures have focussed on processes that engage adults.

The ACA has noted the recommendations of the Royal Commission in relation to engaging children and young people in policy development and decision making and has established this issue is a priority area of review going forward.

#### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure**

The ACA is in the process of developing measures to engage young people in the development and implementation of child protection policies and processes.

The SMC is in the process of consulting with academic experts and other faith-based groups with experience in this area

### **Section 3: Reporting for specific non-government institutions**

#### **Volume 16 Religious Institutions – Recommendations to the Anglican Church**

##### **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.1

##### **Measure:**

**The Anglican Church of Australia should adopt a uniform episcopal standards framework that ensures that bishops and former bishops are accountable to an appropriate authority or body in relation to their response to complaints of child sexual abuse.**

##### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

In 2007, the General Synod passed the Episcopal Standards Canon 2007. This Canon provided for the establishment of two national bodies, the Episcopal Standards Commission and the Episcopal Standards Board, to respectively investigate and determine the fitness of members of the House of Bishops to hold office.

In 2010, the Standing Committee appointed the Episcopal Ministry Task Force (the EMTF) to review the principles behind and the operation of various matters including determining a Bishop's fitness to hold office with a view to promoting national uniformity. The appointment of the EMTF grew out of a concern that a number of dioceses had declined to adopt the Episcopal Standards Canon 2007, or having adopted it, had later excluded it in accordance with the provisions of the ACA Constitution. The Province of Victoria was proceeding to develop its own legislation.

In 2014, the General Synod passed a resolution commending for enactment by every diocese the Model Episcopal Standards Ordinance. This Ordinance provided for the establishment of three diocesan bodies, the Episcopal Standards Committee, the Episcopal Standards Board and the Episcopal Standards Review Board, to respectively investigate and determine the fitness of the diocesan bishop.

In 2016 it was identified that further work was required to implement a national episcopal standards process as only 11 of the 23 dioceses passed legislation giving effect to the Model Episcopal Standards Ordinance.

In 2017 the General Synod passed the [Episcopal Standards \(Child Protection\) Canon 2017](#) which provides for the determination of the fitness of current and former diocesan bishops to hold office or to remain in Holy Orders.

The determination is generally limited to consideration of examinable conduct which includes child abuse, and the failure without reasonable excuse to comply with a law requiring the reporting of child abuse to the police or another authority.

##### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

17 of the 23 dioceses of the ACA have adopted the Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017. The remaining will consider adoption in 2019.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.2

### **Measure:**

**The Anglican Church of Australia should adopt a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse, which expressly covers: a) members of professional standards bodies; b) members of diocesan councils (otherwise known as bishop-in-council or standing committee of synod); c) members of the Standing Committee of the General Synod; d) chancellors and legal advisers for dioceses.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

The model Professional Standards Ordinance promoted to all dioceses in 2004 included principles addressing conflict of interest and promoting independence of investigation and decision making processes.

The ACA has noted the Royal Commission recommendations to develop a specific conflict of interest policy in addition to the existing principles in place.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and the Church Law Commission to collaborate and prepare a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse, and any amendments of canons and rules proposed to give effect to this policy.

Work has commenced and recommendations will be presented in 2019.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.3

**Measure:**

**The Anglican Church of Australia should amend Being Together to expressly refer to the importance of child safety.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod adopted Faithfulness in Service as a national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and lay church workers.

In 2010 the Professional Standards Commission identified the need for a document describing the expectations for behaviour in our Church communities and to complement Faithfulness in Service. [Being Together](#) is a document which has been developed consultatively to fulfil this need.

In 2014 the General Synod adopted Being Together and recommended it to all dioceses.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to prepare an amendment of Being Together to expressly refer to the importance of child safety

Work has commenced and revised document will be presented to the next meeting of General Synod in 2020.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.4

**Measure:**

**The Anglican Church of Australia should develop a national approach to the selection, screening and training of candidates for ordination in the Anglican Church (with regard to safe ministry).**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children

These recommendations included the adoption of the Safe Ministry Check (the national applicant and referee questionnaires for the selection of ordination candidates and for the screening of clergy and church workers who have contact with children in their ministry). They also included safe ministry training for clergy and church workers.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time and widely adopted by dioceses.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC, Mission and Ministry Commission and Anglican Theological Educators Network to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to a national approach for the selection of candidates for ordination with regard to safe ministry, and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 or another canon proposed to give effect to this policy.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.5

### **Measure:**

**The Anglican Church of Australia should develop and each diocese should implement mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, clergy, religious and lay personnel): a) undertake mandatory, regular professional development, compulsory components being professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety, b) undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision, c) undergo regular performance appraisals.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children. These recommendations included a system of ministry support for clergy including professional supervision.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time. A number of metropolitan dioceses and larger regional dioceses have implemented professional development and supervision programs. .

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and Mission and Ministry Commission to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to mandatory national standards for clergy and church workers for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals, and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 or another canon proposed to give effect to this policy.

The General Synod and SMC have engaged a consultant to progress the development of mandatory national standards for consideration at the next meeting of General Synod in 2020.

## **Volume 16 Religious Institutions – Recommendations to all Religious Institution**

### **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.31

#### **Measure:**

**All institutions that provide activities or services of any kind, under the auspices of a particular religious denomination or faith, through which adults have contact with children, should implement the 10 Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission.**

#### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The Anglican Church has been working with the National Council of Churches Australia as part of a task group to review the current Safe Church Training Agreement framework and standards to reflect the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The Anglican Church has also joined the NSW Ombudsman's Survivor and Faith Group Child Safety Standing Committee to gain knowledge from and assist other faith groups in responding to the recommendations of the Royal Commission and in particular to the 10 National Principles.

#### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Safe Ministry Commission is establishing an Anglican working group including representatives from Anglicare Australia and the Anglican Schools Association to consider the implementation of the National Child Safe Principles for all Anglican entities.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.32

**Measure:**

**Religious organisations should adopt the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards as nationally mandated standards for each of their affiliated institutions.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

Prior to the identification of the 10 Child Safe Standards, the ACA has promoted national standards, in accordance with best practice at the time, for adoption by its dioceses and affiliated institutions.

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The Safe Ministry Commission is establishing an Anglican working group including representatives from Anglicare Australia and the Anglican Schools Association to consider the implementation of the National Child Safe Principles for all Anglican entities.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.33

**Measure:**

**Religious organisations should drive a consistent approach to the implementation of the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards in each of their affiliated institutions.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

Prior to the identification of the 10 Child Safe Standards, the ACA has promoted national standards, in accordance with best practice at the time, for adoption by its dioceses and affiliated institutions.

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The Safe Ministry Commission is establishing an Anglican working group including representatives from Anglicare Australia and the Anglican Schools Association to consider the implementation of the National Child Safe Principles for all Anglican entities.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.34

**Measure:**

**Religious organisations should work closely with relevant state and territory oversight bodies to support the implementation of and compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards in each of their affiliated institutions.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

A number of dioceses of the ACA have been actively engaged with relevant state and territory oversight bodies within their local jurisdiction on the introduction of new regulatory and reporting arrangements.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Anglican Church has joined the NSW Ombudsman's Survivor and Faith Group Child Safety Standing Committee to respond to the recommendations of the Royal Commission and in particular to the 10 National Principles.

The dioceses of the Anglican Church will engage with relevant state and territory oversight bodies upon the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) adoption of the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in early 2019.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.35

**Measure:**

**Religious institutions in highly regulated sectors, such as schools and out-of-home care service providers, should report their compliance with the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards as monitored by the relevant sector regulator, to the religious organisation to which they are affiliated.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

Anglicare Australia (AA), the peak body for Anglican community service agencies and Anglican Schools Australia (ASA) are monitoring the development and introduction of new regulatory and reporting arrangements by relevant state and territory oversight bodies on behalf of their members.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

AA and ASA will engage with relevant state and territory oversight bodies upon the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) adoption of the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in early 2019.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.36

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution in Australia should ensure that its religious leaders are provided with leadership training both pre- and post-appointment, including in relation to the promotion of child safety.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 applies to clergy and any lay person undertaking any ministry to children, and prescribes minimum standards and guidelines for safe ministry to children in relation to screening and training.

These minimum standards largely correspond to policies recommended by the General Synod to dioceses between 2004 and 2017.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC, Mission and Ministry Commission and Anglican Theological Educators Network to collaborate, consult with bishops and prepare:

- a) a policy for accredited leadership training for bishops including in relation to the promotion of child safety in consultation with the Viability and Structures Working Group; and
- b) any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 proposed to give effect to this policy.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.37

### **Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, leaders of religious institutions should ensure that there are mechanisms through which they receive advice from individuals with relevant professional expertise on all matters relating to child sexual abuse and child safety. This should include in relation to prevention, policies and procedures and complaint handling. These mechanisms should facilitate advice from people with a variety of professional backgrounds and include lay men and women.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The structures of the General Synod of the ACA provides for elected representation of members in three houses: the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy and the House of Laity.

Membership of the ACA's governing bodies includes representation from each of these houses. This model is duplicated in the diocesan governance structures where the Bishop of the diocese is advised by a council including both clergy and lay members.

The model Professional Standards Ordinance promoted to all ACA dioceses in 2004 identified the skills and experience required of persons appointed to roles with the professional standards process including the Professional Standards Director, Professional Committee and the professional Standards Board. The identified skills include experience in law, child protection social work or counselling.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to consult with dioceses and develop a national repository of people with relevant professional expertise to provide advice on matters relating to child sexual abuse and child safety including advice to mandatory reporters on reporting obligations.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.38

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution should ensure that religious leaders are accountable to an appropriate authority or body, such as a board of management or council, for the decisions they make with respect to child safety.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The ACA has noted the Royal Commission's recommendation related to accountability of religious leaders.

The Bishop of each diocese is advised by a council including both clergy and lay members on matters affecting the diocese, including child safety.. Specifically in matters relating to the response to complaints of abuse the Bishop is advised by committees and boards within the Professional Standards process.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and Episcopal Ministry Task Force to collaborate, consult with diocesan bishops and prepare: a) a policy for the accountability of diocesan bishops for the decisions they make with respect to child safety and any amendments of the Episcopal Standards Canon 2017; and b) any amendments of the Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017 or another canon proposed to give effect to this policy.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.39

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 1, each religious institution should have a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse. The policy should cover all individuals who have a role in responding to complaints of child sexual abuse.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

The model Professional Standards Ordinance promoted to all dioceses in 2004 included principles addressing conflict of interest and promoting independence of investigation and decision making processes.

The ACA has noted the Royal Commission recommendations to develop a specific conflict of interest policy in addition to the existing principles in place.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and the Church Law Commission to collaborate and prepare a policy relating to the management of actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to allegations of child sexual abuse, and any amendments of canons and rules proposed to give effect to this policy.

Work has commenced and recommendations will be presented in 2019.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.40

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 2, wherever a religious institution has children in its care, those children should be provided with age-appropriate prevention education that aims to increase their knowledge of child sexual abuse and build practical skills to assist in strengthening self-protective skills and strategies.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The ACA has noted the Royal Commission's recommendations relating to the introduction of age-appropriate preventative education.

It is acknowledged that the development of national policies and resources has been directed at ensuring adult clergy and churchworkers are trained and aware of child protection strategies to ensure the safety of children in their care.

Although individual churches, schools and agencies have implemented preventative education programs for children a national project in this area is still to commence.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to consult with dioceses, Anglicare Australia and ASA, and prepare: a) a policy for accredited age-appropriate prevention education for children in institutions of the Anglican Church of Australia that have children in their care other than Church bodies specified in section 9 (2) of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017; and b) any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 proposed to give effect to this policy.

The Safe Ministry Commission is establishing an Anglican working group including representatives from Anglicare Australia and the Anglican Schools Association to consider the implementation of the National Child Safe Principles for all Anglican entities.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**  
Recommendations 16.41

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 3, each religious institutions should make provision for family and community involvement by publishing all policies relevant to child safety on its website, providing opportunities for comment on its approach to child safety, and seeking periodic feedback about the effectiveness of its approach to child safety.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

National ACA legislation, policies and procedures relating to the child safety are available on the General Synod website at [Safe Churches](#).

These resources are developed through consultation across dioceses, schools and agencies and in response to academic and community feedback received.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The ACA website will be updated to include a feedback mechanism on its Safe Churches policies and resources. The SMC is considering best practice approaches to facilitate this.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.42

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should require that candidates for religious ministry undergo external psychological testing, including psychosexual assessment, for the purposes of determining their suitability to be a person in religious ministry and to undertake work involving children.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2012 the SMC developed and promoted a process for the comprehensive [psychological assessment](#) of candidates for ordination.

The Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 prescribes the standards of screening for candidates for religious ministry. The screening process for an individual approaching ordination includes a psychological assessment involving an assessment of psychosexual maturity of the person by a registered psychologist.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

Implementation of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.43

### **Measure:**

**Each religious institution should ensure that candidates for religious ministry undertake minimum training on child safety and related matters, including training that: a) equips candidates with an understanding of the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Standards; b) educates candidates on: i) professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety, ii) policies regarding appropriate responses to allegations or complaints of child sexual abuse, and how to implement these policies, iii) how to work with children, including childhood development, iv) identifying and understanding the nature, indicators and impacts of child sexual abuse.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children

These recommendations included the safe ministry training for clergy and church workers.

The nature and content of safe ministry training has been the topic of cross-denominational discussion in Australia since 2005. During 2006 and 2007 the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) Safe Church Training Agreement produced a set of standards for Safe Ministry Training. The General Synod promoted [national Safe Ministry Training Benchmarks](#) which built upon those standards.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time and widely adopted by dioceses.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC, Mission and Ministry Commission and Anglican Theological Educators Network to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to : a) minimum training on child safety and related matters specified in recommendation 16.43 in the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; and b) the provision of opportunities for external training on best practice approaches to child safety; and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 proposed to give effect to this policy.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.44

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, are subject to effective management and oversight and undertake annual performance appraisals.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children. These recommendations included a system of ministry support for clergy including professional supervision.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time. A number of metropolitan dioceses and larger regional dioceses have implemented professional development and supervision programs.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and Mission and Ministry Commission to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to mandatory national standards for clergy and church workers for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals, and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 or another canon proposed to give effect to this policy.

The General Synod and SMC have engaged a consultant to progress the development of mandatory national standards for consideration at the next meeting of General Synod in 2020.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.45

### **Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, have professional supervision with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children. These recommendations included a system of ministry support for clergy including professional supervision.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time. A number of metropolitan dioceses and larger regional dioceses have implemented professional development and supervision programs.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and Mission and Ministry Commission to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to mandatory national standards for clergy and church workers for professional development, professional/pastoral supervision and performance appraisals, and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 or another canon proposed to give effect to this policy.

The General Synod and SMC have engaged a consultant to progress the development of mandatory national standards for consideration at the next meeting of General Synod in 2020.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.46

### **Measure:**

**Religious institutions which receive people from overseas to work in religious or pastoral ministry, or otherwise within their institution, should have targeted programs for the screening, initial training and professional supervision and development of those people. These programs should include material covering professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children

These recommendations included the adoption of the Safe Ministry Check (the national applicant and referee questionnaires for the selection of ordination candidates and for the screening of clergy and church workers who have contact with children in their ministry). They also included safe ministry training for clergy and church workers.

These apply to all persons seeking to work in ministry, including those from overseas.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time and widely adopted by dioceses.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The ACA has contributed to the development of guidelines for sharing information on overseas based clergy within the Anglican Communion.

The object is to develop a reciprocal system for the exchange of information regarding church workers within the Anglican Communion.

Work is progressing.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.47

### **Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 7, each religious institution should require that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, undertake regular training on the institution's child safe policies and procedures. They should also be provided with opportunities for external training on best practice approaches to child safety.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children

These recommendations included the safe ministry training for clergy and church workers.

The nature and content of safe ministry training has been the topic of cross-denominational discussion in Australia since 2005. During 2006 and 2007 the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) Safe Church Training Agreement produced a set of standards for Safe Ministry Training. The General Synod promoted [national Safe Ministry Training Benchmarks](#) which built upon those standards.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time and widely adopted by dioceses.

In most dioceses it is necessary for all clergy and church workers to have completed initial and refresher training on child safe policies and procedures.

All dioceses which have adopted the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 will be audited to measure compliance with the training standards and benchmarks contained in the legislation.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC, Mission and Ministry Commission and Anglican Theological Educators Network to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to : a) minimum training on child safety and related matters specified in recommendation 16.43 in the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; and b) the provision of opportunities for external training on best practice approaches to child safety; and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 proposed to give effect to this policy.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.48

### **Measure:**

**Religious institutions which have a rite of religious confession for children should implement a policy that requires the rite only be conducted in an open space within the clear line of sight of another adult. The policy should specify that, if another adult is not available, the rite of religious confession for the child should not be performed.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The Bishops of the ACA have had a protocol in place relating to the conduct of confessions related to child sexual abuse since 2006.

In March 2018 this protocol was amended to accommodate some early recommendations of the Royal Commission including the following:

*Where a person under the age of 18 years seeks to make a confession:*

- a. the minister proposing to hear the confession must do so in an open space and with a clear line of sight to another adult; but*
- b. where no other adult is available, the confession must be deferred until another adult is present.*

See the full version of Protocol 11 in the [Bishops' Protocols 2018](#)

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution noting the policy in the Bishops' Protocol in relation to private confession by children and requested the Safe Ministry Commission to prepare amendments of Faithfulness in Service and the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 to give effect to this policy.

## **Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.49

### **Measure:**

**Codes of conduct in religious institutions should explicitly and equally apply to people in religious ministry and to lay people.**

### **Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

*“Faithfulness in Service”* - A national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers was approved by the General Synod in 2004 and promoted to all dioceses for adoption. The current version is available on the General Synod website at [Faithfulness in Service](#).

Dioceses which have adopted the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 are required to comply with the standards and guidelines of Faithfulness in Service so far as they relate to children (Section 5).

It is acknowledged that Anglican schools and community services agencies may require additional inclusions in their code of conduct, due to local jurisdictional regulations. The Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 confirms Faithfulness in Service as the prescribed code of conduct for a Church body subject to the Canon, unless an application is made for approval of an alternative.

In 2010 the Standing Committee approved a document describing the expectations for behaviour in our Church communities and to complement Faithfulness in Service. [Being Together](#) is a statement of expectations for members of Church communities.

### **Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to prepare an amendment of Being Together to expressly refer to the importance of child safety

Work has commenced and revised document will be presented to the next meeting of General Synod in 2020.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.50

**Measure:**

**Consistent with Child Safe Standard 7, each religious institution should require all people in religious ministry, leaders, members of boards, councils and other governing bodies, employees, relevant contractors and volunteers to undergo initial and periodic training on its code of conduct. This training should include: a) what kinds of allegations or complaints relating to child sexual abuse should be reported and to whom; b) identifying inappropriate behaviour which may be a precursor to abuse, including grooming; c) recognising physical and behavioural indicators of child sexual abuse; d) that all complaints relating to child sexual abuse must be taken seriously, regardless of the perceived severity of the behaviour.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2004 the General Synod passed a resolution recommending that dioceses adopt a range of measures relating to the protection of children

These recommendations included the safe ministry training for clergy and church workers.

The nature and content of safe ministry training has been the topic of cross-denominational discussion in Australia since 2005. During 2006 and 2007 the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) Safe Church Training Agreement produced a set of standards for Safe Ministry Training. The General Synod promoted [national Safe Ministry Training Benchmarks](#) which built upon those standards.

These measures have been reviewed, amended and promoted since that time and widely adopted by dioceses.

In most dioceses it is necessary for all clergy and church workers to have completed initial and refresher training on child safe policies and procedures.

All dioceses which have adopted the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 will be audited to measure compliance with the training standards and benchmarks contained in the legislation.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC, Mission and Ministry Commission and Anglican Theological Educators Network to collaborate, consult with dioceses, where practicable participate in ecumenical discussions, and prepare a policy in relation to : a) minimum training on child safety and related matters specified in recommendation 16.43 in the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; and b) the provision of opportunities for external training on best practice approaches to child safety; and any amendments of the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 proposed to give effect to this policy.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**  
Recommendations 16.51

**Measure:**

**All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, upon receiving a complaint of child sexual abuse, an initial risk assessment is conducted to identify and minimise any risks to children.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018**

In 2004, the General Synod approved a model professional standards ordinance to cover disciplinary processes in relation to complaints of sexual misconduct and child abuse against clergy. Most dioceses have passed ordinances along these lines, some adopting the model ordinance without modification, others with varying degrees of modification.

All dioceses have appointed a Director of Professional Standards with responsibility for coordinating the response and investigation of complaints of the abuse. Information on making a complaint is made available in church operational locations and on diocesan websites.

Individual schools and agencies have either adopted the national model or have implemented standards of their own.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure**

The Royal Commission noted that there are a range of professional standards and complaints management processes adopted across the ACA.

The General Synod in 2017 requested the Safe Ministry Commission to develop recommendations for a nationally consistent professional standards process across the ACA.

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to consult with dioceses, Anglicare Australia and ASA and prepare a policy on whether professional standards and disciplinary ordinances and other complaint handling policies of these bodies should require that upon receiving a complaint of child sexual abuse, an initial risk assessment is conducted to identify and minimise any risks to children.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.52

**Measure:**

**All religious institutions' complaint handling policies should require that, if a complaint of child sexual abuse against a person in religious ministry is plausible, and there is a risk that person may come into contact with children in the course of their ministry, the person be stood down from ministry while the complaint is investigated.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The professional standards processed in operation in the ACA include the guidelines dealing with the suspension, prohibition or voluntary standing down of clergy and church workers during the investigation of a complaint.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to consult with dioceses, Anglicare Australia and ASA and prepare a policy on whether professional standards and disciplinary ordinances and other complaint handling policies of these bodies should require that if a complaint of child sexual abuse against a member of the clergy or church worker is plausible, and there is a risk that person may come into contact with children in the course of their ministry, the person be stood down from ministry while the complaint is investigated

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.53

**Measure:**

**The standard of proof that a religious institution should apply when deciding whether a complaint of child sexual abuse has been substantiated is the balance of probabilities, having regard to the principles in Briginshaw v Briginshaw.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

This standard of proof currently applies under professional standards ordinances and disciplinary processes in operation in the ACA

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

No further work required.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.54

**Measure:**

**Religious institutions should apply the same standards for investigating complaints of child sexual abuse whether or not the subject of the complaint is a person in religious ministry.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The same standards for investigating complaints of child sexual abuse apply to clergy and church workers under professional standards ordinances in operation in the ACA

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

No further work required.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.55

**Measure:**

**Any person in religious ministry who is the subject of a complaint of child sexual abuse which is substantiated on the balance of probabilities, having regard to the principles in *Briginshaw v Briginshaw*, or who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, should be permanently removed from ministry. Religious institutions should also take all necessary steps to effectively prohibit the person from in any way holding himself or herself out as being a person with religious authority.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The professional standards and tribunal processes in operation in the ACA include guidelines dealing with the prohibition of ministry by clergy and church workers during the investigation of a complaint and as an outcome of disciplinary procedures.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and CLC to collaborate, consult with diocesan bishops and prepare a policy as to the circumstances in which a member of the clergy: a) who is substantiated should be permanently removed from ministry; and b) who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should be permanently removed from ministry and deposed from holy orders.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.56

**Measure:**

**Any person in religious ministry who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should: b) in the case of Anglican clergy, be deposed from holy orders.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

The professional standards and tribunal processes in operation in the ACA include guidelines dealing with the prohibition of ministry by clergy and church workers during the investigation of a complaint and as an outcome of disciplinary procedures.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC and CLC to collaborate, consult with diocesan bishops and prepare a policy as to the circumstances in which a member of the clergy: a) who is substantiated should be permanently removed from ministry; and b) who is convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse should be permanently removed from ministry and deposed from holy orders.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.57

**Measure:**

Where a religious institution becomes aware that any person attending any of its religious services or activities is the subject of a substantiated complaint of child sexual abuse, or has been convicted of an offence relating to child sexual abuse, the religious institution should: a) assess the level of risk posed to children by that perpetrator's ongoing involvement in the religious community, b) take appropriate steps to manage that risk.

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2009 the Standing Committee of the General Synod endorsed and promoted guidelines for parish safety where there is a risk of sexual abuse by a person of concern.

In 2017 a policy was approved by the Standing Committee and recommended to dioceses dealing with [Safe Ministry with Person of Concern](#).

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

Dioceses which have adopted the Safe Ministry to Children Canon 2017 will be audited against the adoption and implementation of the policy and guidelines.

**Recommendation(s) the measure is in response to:**

Recommendations 16.58

**Measure:**

**Each religious organisation should consider establishing a national register which records limited but sufficient information to assist affiliated institutions to identify and respond to any risks to children that may be posed by people in religious or pastoral ministry.**

**Description of measures implemented prior to December 2018:**

In 2007, the General Synod passed the National Register Canon 2007 which provided for the establishment of the National Register and four protocols for its implementation.

The National Register is an essential part of the Church's response to the prevention of child abuse and adult sexual misconduct. The Canon provides for a national, transparent and accountable process to ensure appropriate checks are made before all ordinations, licences or appointments are made.

The Directors of Professional Standards in all dioceses are required to enter relevant information into the National Register. Currently this information does not extend to persons working in affiliated institutions in all dioceses.

The National Register contains only information primarily pertaining to complaints or findings of child abuse and adult sexual misconduct as well as adverse findings against or adverse admissions made by clergy or lay people within the Church.

Details about the operation of the National Register may be found in the National Register Canon 2007. Operational instructions for handling of information on the National Register (input, inquiries, access and disclosure) are provided for in a series of protocols.

This information is provided on the [National Register](#) page on the General Synod website.

**Prospective work that will be undertaken post-2018 to implement this measure:**

The Standing Committee at its meeting held on 11-12 May 2018 passed a resolution requesting the SMC to consult with Anglicare Australia and Anglican Schools Australia and prepare: a) a policy in relation to whether the scope of the National Register Canon 2007 should be extended to cover officers, employees and volunteers of all Anglican Church of Australia institutions; and if appropriate, b) any amendments of the National Register Canon 2007 proposed to give effect to this policy.

#### **Section 4: Further Information and Attachments**

Should they wish, this section will allow institutions to:

- attach additional information from a separate document.
- provide additional information in a text box, see example below.

**Please provide any further information you would like to include in your report:**

Access to legislation, policy and resources currently operating in the ACA has been provided by links to the [General Synod website](#) throughout this report.