



Anglican Church of Australia

Primate: The Most Reverend Geoffrey Smith

13 December 2021

A statement by the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia

The Episcopal Standards Board of the Anglican Church of Australia has determined that Roger Herft, formerly Archbishop of Perth and Bishop of Newcastle, is unfit to remain in Holy Orders and that he should be deposed, which means that following his deposition he will no longer be recognised as an ordained member of the Anglican Church.

The Episcopal Standards Board is a disciplinary tribunal established by the Church to make determinations arising from the behaviour of serving and retired Bishops of the Church.

The basis of the Board's decision were findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Commission found that Mr Herft had failed to deal appropriately with some allegations of child sexual abuse while he was bishop of Newcastle.

There is no suggestion, and there has been no allegation, that Mr Herft himself personally participated in such behaviour. The Board has examined the extent to which he discharged his responsibility as bishop.

Anglicans were shocked and dismayed at the unfolding in the Royal Commission of the scope of our failure to tackle child sexual abuse within the Church and the depth of survivors' pain and suffering. We are deeply ashamed of the many ways in which we let down survivors, both in the way we have acted and the way we failed to act.

The Anglican Church of Australia is committed to the safety of children and vulnerable people in its care and to ensuring that information concerning possible abuse is taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

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