

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

IN THE APPELLATE)
TRIBUNAL)

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Special Tribunal Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Episcopal Standards (Adoption and Transition) Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Offences Amendment Canon 2026**.

DETERMINATION OF THE APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

17 July 2026

The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short, Primate of Australia

Greetings,

You referred to the Appellate Tribunal a series of matters concerning the operation of section 28 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia with respect to Proposals arising out of the Report of the Episcopal Professional Standards Working Group which was reviewing the effectiveness of the structures in place to deliver episcopal standards processes in the Anglican Church of Australia.

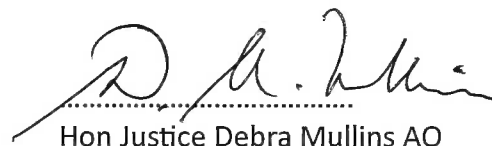
The Reference is attached to the Reasons of the Tribunal which are annexed.

I have the honour to report that the Tribunal's unanimous determination of the questions that arise on the Reference are in accordance with the attached Report which I have duly certified.

The answers to the questions raised are as follows:

1. The Bill for the Special Tribunal Canon 2026 deals with or concerns the discipline of the Church and is a Special Bill that should proceed with the procedure set out in section 28 of the Constitution.
2. The Bill for the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026 deals with or concerns the discipline of the Church and is a Special Bill that should proceed with the procedure set out in section 28 of the Constitution.
3. The Bill for the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026 deals with or concerns the discipline of the Church and is a Special Bill that should proceed with the procedure set out in section 28 of the Constitution.
4. The Bill for the Episcopal Standards (Adoption and Transition) Canon 2026 deals with or concerns the discipline of the Church and is a Special Bill that should proceed with the procedure set out in section 28 of the Constitution.
5. The Bill for the Offences Amendment Canon 2026 deals with or concerns the discipline of the Church and is a Special Bill that should proceed with the procedure set out in section 28 of the Constitution.

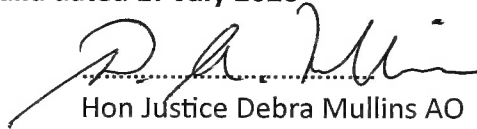
Dated 17 July 2026



Hon Justice Debra Mullins AO
President of the Appellate Tribunal

And signed on behalf of the other Members of the Appellate Tribunal, the Hon Richard Refshauge AM, Deputy President, the Most Revd Kanishka Raffel, the Right Revd Richard Treloar, the Right Revd Garry Weatherill, the Hon Justice Clyde Croft AM and the Hon Justice Michael Meek

This and the following 11 pages constitute the Report referred to in my certificate to the Primate of Australia dated 17 July 2026



Hon Justice Debra Mullins AO
President of the Appellate Tribunal

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

**IN THE APPELLATE)
TRIBUNAL)**

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Special Tribunal Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for Episcopal Standards (Adoption and Transition) Canon 2026**;

- and -

IN THE MATTER of a **REFERENCE** by the Primate under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia of the question arising under the Constitution of the said Church concerning the Proposal constituted by the **Bill for the Offences Amendment Canon 2026**.

REASONS FOR DETERMINATION

Introduction

On 15 May 2026, the Primate referred 5 questions to the Appellate Tribunal (**this Tribunal**) concerning proposals under section 29 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia (**this Church**). A copy of the Reference is attached to these Reasons.

It is convenient to address each of the questions together as they raise essentially the same issue, though about separate proposals, which have some differences, addressed where relevant.

Background

This Church will hold its General Synod shortly, commencing on 10 August 2026. Included in the agenda for that Synod are a number of Bills for Canons which have been drafted to implement proposals recommended by the Episcopal Standards Process Review Working Group (**the Working Group**).

The Working Group was created to conduct the Episcopal Standards Process Review established by the Standing Committee of General Synod in April 2023. The Working Group has proposed a number of legislative amendments. The overall objectives of them are:

- to simplify and make more certain the law concerning what episcopal conduct is proscribed; and
- to increase the likelihood of a single approach to episcopal standards across all the dioceses in this Church; and
- to remove the uncertainty and consequential costs associated with fitness based on “examinable conduct”; and
- to make procedural changes to reduce the time needed to investigate complaints and hear charges; and
- to reduce the reputational risk to this Church arising from protracted investigations and decision-making in relation to complaints; and
- to restate how the procedures should involve or affect bishops the subject of a complaint, complainants and alleged victims.

Chapter V of the Constitution of this Church (**the Constitution**) makes provision for the making of Canons which come to the General Synod by way of a Bill for the relevant Canon, which is then made or enacted if the Bill is passed.

One facet of sections 26-28A of the Constitution is to create a distinction between a “Bill” and a “Special Bill”, for the latter of which a special procedure is specified. For example, it requires a special majority of votes at the General Synod and for assent by each of the Synods of the Dioceses which form this Church. It is clear from the structure of these

sections that there are different procedures for the consideration of “Bills” and “Special Bills”.

Thus, the Constitution provides in section 28 (1) as follows:

A bill (not being a bill for a canon to alter this Constitution) which deals with or concerns the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church shall follow the procedure of this section as a special bill unless, at any time before it votes on a motion that the bill do pass, Synod by votes of at least three-fourths of the members present in each house decides that it need not proceed as a special bill.

Section (2) makes provision for 25 members of the General Synod to petition for the Bill to be treated as a Special Bill, subject to a decision of the General Synod, and section 28 (3) also sets out the procedure for dealing with a Special Bill.

The procedure in section 28 (2) also provides that three-fourths of the members present in each house of the Synod can decide that the Bill need not proceed as a Special Bill.

The word “discipline” used in this section, which is in Chapter V of the Constitution, is relevantly defined in section 74 (9) (a) as follows:

In this Constitution "discipline" means

1. (a) in Chapters II to VII and X to XII the obligation to adhere to, to observe and to carry out (as appropriate):
 - (i) the faith, ritual and ceremonial of this Church; and
 - (ii) the other rules of this Church which impose on the members of the clergy obligations regarding the religious and moral life of this Church.

Section 29 (4) of the Constitution identifies the questions which may be stated in a Reference to this Tribunal, in particular “[d]oes any part of the Act or Proposal identified in the reference deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?” Section 29 (1) (b) describes “Proposal” as follows:

"Proposal" means any proposal that General Synod make a canon or a rule or a statement or that General Synod pass a resolution, being a proposal of which notice has been given to the General Synod in accordance with any requirements applicable thereto (notwithstanding that consideration may or may not have been given to the proposal by General Synod) but does not include an Act.

Accordingly, the Standing Committee of the General Synod was concerned whether each or any of the Bills, of which notice has been given that they are to be introduced to the General Synod, may have to proceed as a Special Bill, under section 28 (3) of the Constitution. Hence its request that a Reference be made to this Tribunal.

The Proceedings.

At its meeting on 1-2 May 2026, the Standing Committee of General Synod asked the Primate to make that Reference, that is to refer to this Tribunal certain questions, which are set out below, concerning the Bills proposed, as to whether any part of them was and should proceed as a Special Bill for the purposes of section 28 of the Constitution.

As noted above, the Primate did make that Reference to this Tribunal on 15 May 2026. The Reference was accompanied by a copy of each Bill and the Explanatory Memorandum for each of them.

In addition, a background note from Dr. Ian Gibson, Chair of the Church Law Commission and a member of the General Synod Standing Committee, was also provided with the Reference.

In his note, Dr Gibson referred to three decisions of this Tribunal. They were: the Determination in relation to References relating to the Special Tribunal Canon 2004 and the National Register Canon 2004 dated 4 April 2007 ("the **2007 Determination**"); the Determination in relation to References relating to the National Register Canon 2007, the Special Tribunal Canon 2007 and the Offences Canon Amendment Canon 2007 dated 8 March 2010 ("the **March 2010 Determination**"); the Determination in relation to References relating to the Special Tribunal Canon 2007 and the Offences Canon Amendment Canon 2007 dated 8 March 2010 ("the **September 2010 Determination**").

This Tribunal has had regard to this note and to these Determinations and to all the other material provided with the Reference. Having considered this material, the Tribunal determined that it was not necessary to hold a hearing on the reference, nor call for submissions, and considered a decision, which was preferably to be made prior to the General Synod in August, could properly be made on the material provided.

The Questions

The questions in the Reference are as follows:

- (a) Does any part of the Proposal to make the Special Tribunal Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
- (b) Does any part of the Proposal to make the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
- (c) Does any part of the Proposal to make the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
- (d) Does any part of the Proposal to make the Episcopal Standards (Adoption and Transition) Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?

(e) Does any part of the Proposal to make the Offences Amendment Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?

Each question refers to one of the five Bills that will be before the General Synod. It is appropriate to summarise the effect of each Bill. None of the Bills deals with or concerns the ritual or ceremonial of this Church. The real question is whether any of the Bills deals with or concerns the discipline of this Church.

The Bill for the Special Tribunal Canon 2026

This Bill deals with the Special Tribunal, established by section 53 of the Constitution, and which has jurisdiction under section 56 (6) of the Constitution to hear and determine charges against any member of the House of Bishops or any Bishop Assistant to the Primate in the capacity as the Primate.

The Working Group has recommended that the Special Tribunal Canon 2007 (**the 2007 Canon**) be extensively rewritten. It did not, however, recommend that the 2007 Canon be repealed as it will continue to operate in some Dioceses until the Special Tribunal Canon 2026 is adopted in that Diocese. The proposed Canon addresses the procedures of the Special Tribunal. It is intended to render those procedures as fit for purpose as is possible when it becomes the sole pathway for receiving and determining complaints made against Bishops (as defined).

It does not impose any obligation on a Bishop which it is necessary for that Bishop to address, to observe or to carry out or substantive rules imposing such obligations to observe the faith, ritual or ceremonial or regarding the religious and moral life of this Church. It is wholly procedural but only in relation to the investigation, determination and resolution of any complaint about charges against the Bishop in relation to any breach of faith, ritual, ceremonial or discipline.

The Bill for the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026.

This Bill proposes an amendment to the Offences Canon 1962, but for the sole purpose of providing that a sexual offence relating to a child has been disgraceful conduct since the commencement of the Offences Canon 1962.

In this, it is said that it does not create an offence retrospectively nor does it make illegal something that was previously legal, but, it is said, serves only to make explicit what must always have been implicit. Indeed, it is said that it does not create an offence at all, as disgraceful conduct has always been an offence. This Tribunal is not required to accept or reject this characterisation and makes no comment on it.

The Bill for the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026.

Under section 61A of the Constitution, a Bishop of a Diocese might be suspended once a charge has been promoted against him or her. This, however, does not address the period

between the making of a complaint and the promotion of a charge. The process for the necessary investigation of such a complaint may mean that there is a significant time period between the making of the complaint and the promotion of a charge.

The Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017 provides for a mandatory suspension of a Diocesan Bishop as soon as a credible complaint of a sexual offence against a child is received and the consequences of such a suspension. This Canon would make clear, by replicating those provisions, that they would continue to apply once this Canon would apply if the Bill passes, despite the Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017 no longer applying in a Diocese that adopts the Special Tribunal Canon 2026.

The Bill for the Episcopal Standards (Adoption and Transition) Canon 2026.

The purpose of this Bill is to make a Canon that would manage the transition from the current legislative regime for Episcopal Standards to the new legislative regime proposed by the Working Group when a Diocesan Synod chooses to make that transition.

That transition is effected when a Diocese adopts the Special Tribunal Canon 2026. By that adoption, the Episcopal Standards Canon 2007 and the Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017 are excluded from operation in that Diocese and the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026 is adopted by that Diocese.

The Canon would make certain transitional provisions to address issues such as allegations, complaints or charges to be concluded under the current legislation and preserve the position of members of the Special Tribunal.

The Bill for the Offences Amendment Canon 2026.

The three key reasons for this Bill are to make a Canon that would import into the Offences Canon 1962 all the definitions and proscribed conduct covered by the Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017, to simplify the wording of the offence relating to disgraceful conduct and generally to correct the drafting of various provisions, especially those introduced in recent General Synods.

Among the changes, it removes the requirement that disgraceful conduct must also be notorious if committed by a member of the clergy or a Bishop and to retain certain provisions of the Episcopal Standards (Child Protection) Canon 2017 which would otherwise be excluded once the Special Tribunal Canon 2026 is made.

Consideration.

The powers of General Synod in making legislation by the Synod has stages. The first stage is the consideration and making of a Bill for a Canon, which is the legislation. Sections 26 to 28A are addressed to Bills. Section 30 is addressed to Canons. Sections 28 and 30, therefore, deal with separate matters. Section 29, which separates them, references both Bills and Canons.

The central issue in this case is the meaning of the verbs used in section 28 to address the relationship between the Canons (made if the Bills pass) and the discipline of this Church. In particular, it is necessary to describe whether the verbs used in section 28 (1) of the Constitution to describe the relationship between the content of each of the Bills and the discipline of this Church have such a relationship as to require the Bills (or any of them) to be dealt with as Special Bills.

Those verbs are “deal with” and “concern”. They are words of wide import.

It is relevant that a different word is used in section 30 of the Constitution, namely “affect” when determining the relationship of a Canon with faith, ritual, ceremonial or discipline and the order and good government of this Church within a Diocese. That word has received some consideration by this Tribunal: the 2007 Determination, the March 2010 Determination and the September 2010 Determination.

Thus, there is no critical need to determine finally whether any of the Bills “affects” the ritual, ceremonial or discipline of this Church, but rather to decide that they reach the relatively low threshold of whether each of the Bills “deals with or concerns”, relevantly here, the discipline of this Church.

Dr Gibson’s note suggested that the verbs “deal with” and “concern” have the same meaning as “affect” and that the meaning ascribed to it in the three Determinations should apply to the verbs used in section 28.

That word, though used in section 30 of the Constitution, which applies after a Canon has been passed by the General Synod, is, however, not used in section 28.

Further, as Dr Gibson noted, there were no decisions of the secular courts that were of any particular assistance in determining the proper meaning of the verbs.

These subject words should be given their ordinary meaning, unless the context requires otherwise. Thus, the construction of a document such as the Constitution of this Church is one of discerning the meaning from the words actually used and the context in which they are used: *Project Blue Sky v ABA* [1988] HCA 28; 194 CLR 355 at [69].

As Dr Gibson has pointed out, the three determinations of this Tribunal to which he referred have considered the meaning of “affect”. In particular, the 2007 Determination gave careful consideration to the meaning of “affect”. It showed that the various decisions of courts had given a number of meanings, which might be called passive or active. For example, in *Shanks v Shanks* (1982) 65 CLR 334 at 337, “affect” was held to mean “touching, relating to or concerning”, but in *Re Bluston* [1967] Ch 615 at 633, the ordinary meaning of “affected” was “influenced, altered, shaped”.

In the end, this Tribunal held that the term as used in section 30 of the Constitution should be used in the narrow sense, that is “to influence directly the effect of, to have or produce an effect on or to make a difference to or produce a change in” something.

In this sense, even though the word “affects” has not been used in section 28 of the Constitution, it is clear that the Bill for an Offences Amendment Canon 2026 does alter or add to the obligations of clergy in the way referred to in section 74 (9) of the Constitution. It does affect the obligations on clergy and Bishops as referred to in section 74 (9) of the Constitution. In this sense, if the Canon affects the discipline of this Church, it must deal with or concern it. Thus, the answer to question (e) above is that, subject to any contrary decision of the General Synod, this Bill must proceed as a Special Bill, whatever the answer to the questions relating to the other Bills.

This finding, however, does not answer the other questions relating to the other Bills.

Generally, the use of a word in legislation should be given a consistent meaning in each place it appears. See *Registrar of Titles (WA) v Franzen* (1975) 132 CLR 611 at 618.

Further, where a different word is used in a similar context, then it is to be assumed that the word has a different meaning. Thus, in *Clyne v Federal Commissioner of Taxation* (1981) 150 CLR 1, the High Court held that, where a statute used the word “due” and then used the words “due and payable”, the usage in the first place was different and meant that the use of due by itself meant merely owing and not payable.

In this case, the situation is slightly different, but the use in section 30(a) of the Constitution of “affecting” (which was the subject of the 2007 Determination) means that the use of “dealt with or concerns” in Section 28 will have a different meaning unless the context says otherwise.

The context of the use of each of the three words is quite similar in each section, namely to determine whether the effect of the legislation the subject of consideration means that the legislation should be dealt with in a particular way that is not otherwise required for legislation of the General Synod.

As to the meaning of “deals with or concerns”, there is no determination of this Tribunal as to the meaning of these words and no decision of the secular courts identified that may be helpful in interpretation.

Accordingly, resort can be had to ordinary dictionaries with some reservation. As was explained by Loukas-Karlsson J in *Will v The Queen (No 2)* [2021] ACTCA 14 at [121],

121. Third, when construing a particular word, a court may take judicial notice of the fact of an “ordinary meaning” of a word, and can do so with the assistance of an authoritative dictionary (*Kuzmanovski v NSW Lotteries Corporation* [2010] FCA 876; 270 ALR 65 at [37]–[38]). In Australia, the “most authoritative” dictionary is said to be the Macquarie Dictionary (see *House of Pearce Pty Ltd v Bankstown City Council* [2000] NSWCA 44; 48 NSWLR 498 at [33]). I note, however, the concerns expressed by Leeming JA regarding the reliance on dictionaries in discerning meaning within a particular context (see *2 Elizabeth Bay Road Pty Ltd v The Owners Strata Plan No 73943* [2014] NSWCA 409; 88 NSWLR 488 at [81]). The use of a dictionary is considered no substitute for the interpretative process (*TAL Life Ltd v Shuetrim* [2016] NSWCA 68; 91 NSWLR 439 at [80]).

As to “deal”, especially followed by “with”, it is defined in the Macquarie Dictionary as “to occupy oneself for itself” as in “deal with the first question; deal with the study of plants” and “to take action with respect to a thing or person” as in “law courts must deal with lawbreakers”.

In the Oxford English Dictionary “deal” is defined relevantly as “to take measures concerning a problem, person, etc esp. in order to put something right ... [or] associate with”.

These are not directly determinative, but are helpful, as they strongly suggest that the meaning in section 28 of the Constitution of the words “deal with” is “to respond to or address the issue of discipline” rather than, or at least as well as, to alter the obligations that constitutes discipline. In this sense, the word can be said to refer to a means of addressing discipline rather than necessarily defining or altering what constitutes discipline as defined.

As to “concern”, the Macquarie Dictionary defines it as “to relate to; be connected with, be of interest or important to; affect: *the problem concerns us all*”. The Oxford English Dictionary defines “concern” as “be relevant or important to (*this concerns you*) ... relate to, be about”. Again, this, despite the reference in the Oxford English Dictionary to “affect”, does seem to provide a meaning that is about a relationship with or involvement with rather than the adding or alteration of an obligation that constitutes discipline.

In sum, these definitions might be said to be passive to the content of the discipline which binds and imposes obligations on the clergy, including Bishops, who are bound by the discipline of this Church, in contradistinction to “affect” which has, at least as defined by this Tribunal, an active effect on the discipline which requires some direct change or addition to the obligations which are the content of the discipline involved.

In these senses, it is clear that, when using the words “deals with or concerns ... discipline” in s 28 of the Constitution, it does not require that the Canon makes any additional or alternative obligation or alteration to the nature or content of the obligation that constitutes discipline. These meanings lead to the conclusion that these words are apt to include matters that respond to, manage or attend to matters of discipline rather than, necessarily, refer to the content of the obligations that constitute discipline, although, of course, they may do so.

Thus, the fact that most of the Bills, the subject of this Reference, constitute procedural provisions for the reception of complaints, investigation of them, management of persons the subject of complaints, the progressing of charges and the outcomes of that process and how that is handled does not mean that they do not “deal with or concern the discipline of the Church”. All these matters are related to, connected to and respond to the discipline of this Church.

While the matters do not directly alter or add to the obligations of clergy, being the discipline as defined, the subject of the legislation, they deal with or concern the discipline of this Church as they are directly related to or connected to it as they constitute measures to respond to the acts which constitute a breach of discipline.

This result is, perhaps, unsurprising as a matter of policy. It is, for example, to be noted that procedures are certainly not necessarily divorced from matters of substance when it comes to the regulation by law of matters, such as discipline. For example, Sir Henry Maine commented in HJS Maine *Dissertation on Early Law and Custom* (1883), that the development of substantive law principles often follows from procedural practice.

As one example, were the Bill for the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026 to be passed and so enact that Canon, then, when the Episcopal Standards Director forms a view that a complaint involves a sexual offence and the Senior Presidential Member of the Special Tribunal accepts the recommendation that the Bishop must be suspended from the duties of office, that decision, which has not been made by the Special Tribunal, will give some content to the meaning of “sexual offence”, which generally may be uncontroversial but for which there will be limits that may not in every case be crystal clear. Persons concerned with the meaning of sexual offence will have regard to such a decision.

This is, of course, not the only reason why procedure, such as in most of the Canons the subject of this Reference, “deal with or concern discipline” for the meaning of “deals with or concerns”, as explained above, does really mean that these Canons are related to or connected with discipline in a very real way.

For these reasons, the answers to the questions posed in the Reference are answered as above. Each of the Bills the subject of the Proposals must proceed as Special Bills.

SCHEDULE



Anglican Church of Australia Primate: The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short

Justice Debra Mullins AO
President
Appellate Tribunal

Via email Justice.Mullins@courts.qld.gov.au

Re: Referral of Proposed Canons to Appellate Tribunal

Dear Justice Mullins,

At its meeting on 1-2 May 2026 the Standing Committee of General Synod passed the motion printed below.

On 8 May 2026, notice of the Bills mentioned in the motion was given to General Synod as required under s 29(1)(b) of the Constitution, meaning they became Proposals as defined by that Section. Consequently this letter constitutes a formal referral from me as Primate to the Appellate Tribunal on the questions outlined in the motion.

To assist the Tribunal in its deliberations I have included a briefing paper prepared by Dr Ian Gibson, Chair of the Church Law Commission as well as the texts of the Bills. I am grateful to you and other members of the Appellate Tribunal for your assistance in this matter. Please advise if any further information or clarification is required.

With every blessing,



The Right Reverend Dr Mark Short
Primate
Anglican Church of Australia

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Review of Episcopal Standards Processes in the ACA 13.7 Resolution:

The Standing Committee:

1. received the report from the Convenor of the Episcopal Standards Process Review Working Group dated 17 April 2026
 2. asked the Primate as soon as possible after each of the following Bills has become a Proposal within the meaning of s 29(1)(b) of the Constitution to refer to the Appellate Tribunal under section 29 these questions:
 1. Does any part of the Proposal to make the Special Tribunal Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
 2. Does any part of the Proposal to make the Offences Amendment (Child Protection) Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
 3. Does any part of the Proposal to make the Suspension of Bishops Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
 4. Does any part of the Proposal to make the Episcopal Standards (Adoption and Transition) Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
 5. Does any part of the Proposal to make the Offences Amendment Canon 2026 deal with or concern or affect the ritual ceremonial or discipline of this Church?
 3. agreed that it is unnecessary to seek further advice regarding whether disgraceful conduct can be demonstrated through the totality of a Bishop's conduct over a period of time.
- SC2026/1/47

Note: The three members on the Standing Committee who are members of the Appellate Tribunal and present at the meeting abstained from voting on this motion.

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