

# REPORT ON COMPLIANCE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE "SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS PREVENTION AND PROTECTION POLICY" FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

## INTRODUCTION

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We have been engaged by the Archdiocese of Brisbane to undertake an audit of the activities of the Archdiocese with the objective of assessing the compliance of parishes with the policy and strategies of the Archdiocese designed to ensure compliance with the "Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Prevention and Protection Policy" (the "Policy"), version 3.0 as issued 19 April 2017 and applicable at 30 June 2017. The Policy is accompanied by a document setting out strategies that are designed to assist parishes in their compliance with the Policy (the "Strategies").

Our audit services have been performed on a sample basis across the Archdiocese and these services included completion of visits at nine parishes within the Archdiocese. The Archdiocese operates in a large portion of South-East Queensland and serves over 100 parishes through 235 mass centres. The scope of our audit was focused on the implementation of the policy of the Archdiocese in those parishes that are under the supervision of the Archdiocese. Out of the 100 parishes under the supervision of the Archdiocese. We selected a representative sample of parishes for further inspection during our external audit.

## OUR RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

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The Archdiocese is responsible for compliance with the requirements of the "Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Prevention and Protection Policy" (the "Policy"), version 3.0 as issued 19 April 2017 and applicable at 30 June 2017.

Our responsibility is to express a conclusion on compliance with the requirements of the Policy, in all material respects. Our audit has been conducted in accordance with applicable Standards on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3100 *Compliance Engagements*, to provide reasonable assurance that the parishes of the Archdiocese have complied with the requirements of the Policy. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the compliance of

### BRISBANE

Level 11, 307 Queen Street Brisbane QLD 4000  
GPO Box 2268 Brisbane QLD 4001

phone 07 3218 3900 | fax 07 3218 3901  
www.hanrickcurran.com.au

### CAIRNS

Suite 73, Executive Centre Offices, The Pier at Shangri-La,  
1 Pierpoint Road, Cairns QLD 4870  
PO Box 7170 Cairns QLD 4870

phone 07 4052 7524 | fax 07 4052 7799  
www.hanrickcurran.com.au

Hanrick Curran Audit Pty Ltd  
Authorised Audit Company: 338599 | ABN 13 132 902 188

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the parishes with the Policy. These procedures have been undertaken to form a conclusion as to whether the parishes have complied, in all material respects, with the requirements of the Policy for the period ended 30 June 2017.

### **USE OF REPORT**

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This compliance audit report has been prepared for distribution to the Archdiocese of Brisbane in order to enable the Archdiocese to assess compliance with the requirements of the Policy. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report to any persons or users other than the Archdiocese or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

### **INHERENT LIMITATIONS**

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Because of the inherent limitations of any compliance procedures, the limitation in evidence gathering procedures, and limitations in the design and implementation of the parishes' internal controls, it is possible that non-compliance may occur and not be detected. An audit is not designed to detect all instances of non-compliance with the requirements of the Policy, as an audit is not performed continuously throughout the period and the audit procedures performed in respect of compliance with requirements of the Policy are undertaken on a test basis. The audit conclusion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or the improvements that might be made. It should be appreciated that the matters noted came to our attention during the course of our normal audit examination and as a result do not necessarily include all those matters which a more extensive or special examination might identify. Accordingly, our comments are not intended to cover all aspects of the Archdiocese's internal controls and are limited to those matters that arose from our normal audit procedures.

### **MATTERS FOR ATTENTION**

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#### **1. APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES**

The Policy requires that parishes appoint a Local Safeguarding Representative ("LSR"). Our inspection procedures and site visits identified that not all parishes have had a LSR appointed for the duration of the audit period (being 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017). Out of the nine parishes visited, one parish had only just appointed a new LSR after a change in Parish Priest ("PP"), one parish had appointed a new LSR within the last six months and at one parish, there was a lack



of clarity as to whether the nominated LSR was prepared to continue to act in the role.

Considering that the Policy has existed since July 2014, in various forms, we consider that it is reasonable to expect that each parish will have determined and finalised the appointment of a LSR.

## 2. TRAINING ATTENDANCE AND RECORD KEEPING

Our inspection procedures included examination of documentation to obtain evidence of compliance with the Safeguarding policy. Specifically, we looked to identify compliance with the element of the Strategies that is concerned with the training of volunteers in the requirements of the Policy.

At each parish we visited, we identified evidence of volunteers not having completed the training that is mandated in the Strategies that support the Policy. We also identified weaknesses in documentation and record keeping for training attendance. The percentage of completion of the training varied among the Parishes, however, we obtained sufficient evidence to indicate a degree of non-compliance with the requirement of the Strategies for attendance at training.

## 3. RISK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Our inspection procedures included examination of documentation to obtain evidence of compliance with the Safeguarding policy. Specifically we looked to identify compliance with the element of the Strategies that is concerned with the preparation of risk assessments for parish based events, activities and services. The risk assessment process is mandated by the Strategies and is aimed at ensuring that parish events, activities and services are conducted in an environment where risk to children and vulnerable adults is identified, minimised and managed.

At eight of the nine parish we visited, we identified evidence of weaknesses in documentation and record keeping which were common among parishes. The weaknesses related to risk assessments either not having been prepared or having only been prepared for some of the events in the parish. The percentage of completion of the risk assessments varied among the Parishes, however, we obtained sufficient evidence to indicate a degree of non-compliance with the requirement of the Strategies for preparation of risk assessment documentation.

## 4. EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

Our inspection procedures included examination of documentation to obtain evidence of compliance with the Safeguarding policy. Specifically we looked to identify compliance with the element of the Strategies that is concerned with employment, selection and pre-screening of employees in the parish.



At each parish we visited, we identified evidence of volunteers not having been subject to pre-employment screening questions as expected in the Strategies. We also identified weaknesses in documentation and record keeping for pre-employment screening questions and selection.

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We consider that the evidence identified above, obtained from the parishes visited, indicates a degree of non-compliance with elements of the Strategies that are likely to indicate a weakness in control and compliance across the Archdiocese.

These weaknesses do not indicate material systemic non-compliance with the Policy. Rather they indicate instances where elements of the Policy and its associated Strategies may not have been fully implemented across the Archdiocese.

Weaknesses in record keeping were specifically evident in the areas identified above.

### CONCLUSIONS

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In our opinion and based on the sample of parishes inspected by us, except for those "Matters for Attention" referred to above, the Parishes of the Archdiocese have complied, in all material respects, with the requirements of the Policy as issued by the Archdiocese for the period ended 30 June 2017.

HANRICK CURRAN AUDIT

**HANRICK CURRAN AUDIT PTY LTD**  
**Authorised Audit Company: 338599**

  
**Matthew Green**  
Director

Brisbane, 1 September 2017

