



Anglican Church of Australia

General Synod

Resolutions of the Seventeenth Session of the General Synod relating to child protection and issues arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

R20/17	<p>A Motion relating to the Professional Standards Commission Report</p> <p>The General Synod:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) receives the report of the Professional Standards Commission; (b) recommends that each diocese: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) publish a list of appropriately qualified people as professional supervisors for those in pastoral ministry and promote the use of their services; (ii) include a component for professional supervision in recommended financial packages for those in pastoral ministry; (c) requests the Standing Committee to explore with the dioceses the development of a nationally consistent approach to professional standards legislation with particular reference to its application to child abuse; (d) requests the Safe Ministry Commission: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to measure and review the Church's progress towards being a child safe institution in the light of the elements identified in the report of the Royal Commission Creating Child Safe Institutions issued in July 2016; (ii) to analyse the final report of the Royal Commission and make recommendations as to actions to be taken; (iii) to develop an audio visual resource for use in dioceses that provides information to ministers, churchwardens and parish councils about the implementation of the Policy for Safe Ministry in a parish where there is a risk of sexual abuse by a Person of Concern and the issues raised by the participation of a Person of Concern in the life of a parish; (iv) to develop a resource for use in dioceses for providing care for families who have experienced premature death of a family member due to child sexual abuse; (v) to identify and recommend resources for use in dioceses for responding to family and domestic violence; (vi) to report to the 18th General Synod as to the progress of the Church in the development and implementation of safe ministry policies and structures. <p style="text-align: right;">4 September 2017</p>
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R21/17	<p>Safer Ministry</p> <p>That the General Synod:</p> <p>(a) welcomes resolutions 16.25, 16.26, 16.27 and 16.28 passed by the Anglican Consultative Council in April 2016 (ACC-16) and requests the General Secretary to convey this resolution to the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion and the Archbishop of Canterbury;</p> <p>(b) commends the National Council of Churches in Australia for organising the <i>Safe as Churches? 7</i> and <i>the Safe as Churches? 8</i> conferences on sexual misconduct and abuse in the Australian churches, and supports ongoing joint action by member churches and other participating Australian churches to promote the welfare and safety of all people within their communities. The General Synod requests the General Secretary to convey this resolution to the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Australia;</p> <p>(c) recommends that the Commonwealth Government promote a national system for child protection, and that State and Territory governments as a matter of urgency enact legislation for a national system for child protection that provides for:</p> <p>(i) the mandatory reporting of child abuse by persons including ministers of religion to the police and the government child protection authorities;</p> <p>(ii) the screening of all persons seeking to work with children in a paid or voluntary capacity;</p> <p>(iii) the mutual recognition of clearances for persons to work with children in all States and Territories: and</p> <p>(d) requests that the General Secretary forward the terms of this resolution to the Prime Minister, the Premier or Chief Minister of each State and Territory and the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse forthwith.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">4 September 2017</p>
R35/17	<p>Bishop Greg Thompson</p> <p>This General Synod gives thanks to Almighty God for the courageous ministry and prophetic leadership by the 13th Bishop of Newcastle The Rt Rev'd Gregory Thompson in calling the Church and especially the Diocese of Newcastle to face their past about child sexual abuse and shape a healthy future in responses to Christ's call to protect, esteem and nurture children and vulnerable people.</p> <p>Further this General Synod requests the Primate to convey these sentiments to Bishop Thompson.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">5 September 2017</p>

R43/17	<p>Safe Ministry Implementation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That this Synod gives thanks for the unity of intent expressed by the unanimous resolution of this Canon. 2. That each Diocesan Bishop with the support of their Synod team commits to strive for the adoption of this Canon at the first Diocesan Synod after this General Synod with the hope that all 23 Dioceses will adopt the Canon. 3. That the General Synod embraces a Networking approach to the free exchange of resources and the drawing upon centres of excellence in safe ministry practice to enable the full implementation of the Canon by large and small Dioceses working together. <p style="text-align: right;">6 September 2017</p>
R45/17	<p>Working with Children Check Systems</p> <p>Mr Doug Marr moving, Mr Lachlan Bryant seconding</p> <p>General Synod calls upon the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to develop an age appropriate Working with Children Check system or suitable alternative for those persons aged under 18 who work with children.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6 September 2017</p>
R64/17	<p>Faithfulness in Service and National Consistency regarding professional standards</p> <p>Synod notes repeated concern expressed for children and vulnerable persons other than children in our churches and organisations, and the need to protect both children and adults from abuse. Synod also notes the desirability of a nationally consistent approach to professional standards wherever possible.</p> <p>Therefore Synod requests the General Synod Standing Committee (GSSC) to report to the next session of General Synod on the status of Faithfulness in Service (in the current form approved by GSSC) as our national code of conduct in the various dioceses, specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which dioceses have adopted the Faithfulness in Service without amendment as their code of conduct? 2. Which dioceses have adopted Faithfulness in Service with amendment as their code of conduct? 3. Which dioceses have used Faithfulness in Service, with or without amendment, in some manner other than as a code of conduct? 4. Which dioceses have a code of conduct other than Faithfulness in Service (with or without amendments)? <p>Synod also requests GSSC, in consultation with the Professional Standards Commission, to report to the next session of General Synod on preferred options for effectively ensuring that professional standards regarding the care and protection of adults, especially the vulnerable in our midst, are nationally consistent to the greatest extent possible.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8 September 2017</p>

R66/17	<p>Recognition and thanks for Child Protection Work</p> <p>That this General Synod recognises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The unprecedented level of support in this session for consistent national standards and approaches with respect to child protection, episcopal standards and redress for abuse survivors measures; b. that this reflects the huge investment of time, energy and expertise by key leaders over many years especially in the extensive consultation and collaboration that took place preceding this session; and <p>that this General Synod, therefore, records and expresses its sincere thanks and deep appreciation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Garth Blake SC and the members of the Professional Standards Commission; - The Honourable Justice Debra Mullins and the members of the Church Law Commission and Episcopal Standards Task Force; and - Mr Michael Shand QC; <p>for their unstinting and tireless efforts to prepare legislation and garner support to ensure the protection of children and the accountability of clergy and church workers in this Church.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8 September 2017</p> <p>The motion was carried with acclamation and a standing ovation.</p>
R67/17	<p>The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse</p> <p>Mr Garth Blake moving, Archbishop Philip Freier seconding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) gives thanks to God for the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; (b) acknowledges the significant contribution of the Royal Commission in revealing the extent of child sexual abuse in institutional contexts, identifying appropriate redress to survivors, and recommending strategies to create child safe institutions; (c) expresses its sincere gratitude for the engagement of the Royal Commission with this Church, particularly through the attendance of the Chair, the Hon Peter McClellan AM at National Bishops Meetings, and the address of Mr Robert Fitzgerald AM at this General Synod; (d) prays for the Royal Commission as it completes its work, and that its lasting legacy will be an Australia in which children are safe, including in this Church. <p style="text-align: right;">8 September 2017</p> <p>Immediately following carriage of the motion, the Chair of the Royal Commission Working Group led the General Synod in prayer for the Royal Commission:</p> <p>God of Truth, We pray for the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.</p>

	<p>Give courage and healing to those who tell their stories of suffering. Give compassion to the Commissioners as they listen Give them the insight to pose questions And wisdom to weigh testimony. Bring your Church to true repentance As we face our sins and failures. In the midst of anger, grief and despair Give us grace to shape a future Where children and other vulnerable people Will be safe to flourish in body, mind and spirit. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord.</p>
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