

Submitted Date	17-May-2018 14:41
Total Time Taken	143.62
Come-back-Later Code	G558VW8H6W
1. Is this an individual response or are you officially responding on behalf of an organisation?	Individual
2. Please provide your name	Rick Bailey
3. Please indicate your stakeholder group(s) :	Parishioner, Church volunteer
8. Please select the state(s) and/or territory(s) you are based in?	Queensland
Do you consent to your identifying details being published, in addition to your responses, on the CPSL website?	Yes, CPSL can publish my identifying details
General feedback relating to the Standards	
2. I/we believe that the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards create conditions that will increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting harm to children in Catholic entities.	Strongly disagree
3. I/we believe that the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards will facilitate appropriate response to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of harm to children in Catholic entities.	Strongly disagree
4. I/we believe that the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards will reduce the likelihood of harm to children in Catholic entities.	Strongly disagree

Please provide further explanation regarding your choice of responses to questions 1 to 4, either by providing a general comment below and/or providing specific comments against each Standard in the next section of the Survey.

5. General/Overall comments on the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

: Further to my response last week, I have thought about your proposal some more and have the following additional comments.

Firstly, The abuse reported by the Royal Commission was carried out by only a very, very, very small minority of the members of the church. Whilst this is to be condemned in the strongest possible terms, there was an even far, far, worse crime committed and that was the cover up of what the abusers did by those who were supposed to be in charge and who simply moved the abusers to other places so they could do the same thing somewhere else. Unfortunately, I think that this type of abuse will occur again in the future as I think there is a very small minority in any community who will always do this sort of thing. I in no way condone this sort of behaviour and believe that what MUST happen is that these people must be made to answer for their crimes. Even more importantly, those in charge must be stopped from ever committing their crimes again by ensuring that they cannot, ever again, cover up the crimes of those who do commit abuse (in any form) by moving them elsewhere, as occurred in the past – I believe that my proposal will achieve this.

Looking at the proposals which have occurred since the Royal Commission, that someone/some group decided either, consciously or unconsciously, that everyone was an abuser and that they had to prove that they were not (how do you prove a negative and what about “innocent until proven guilty”). I am left wondering what was on the conscience of those who made this crazy decision – it certainly was not to help the vast majority of people who are not abusers and condemn any form of abuse in the strongest possible terms. I know that that is how all levels of government treat us at present

but that doesn't make it right.

Looking at these proposals logically, I can only conclude that they are designed with two things in mind – that those who were involved in any way with the cover ups of the abuses in the past can say “look at what we have done to prevent abuse happening again” and those who are on any of the boards/committees can keep their jobs. Whilst the idea of one set of rules for all of Australia would seem to be the ideal, there are a number of other things which do not seem to have been considered, they include:-

- That God made us all different and therefore we all respond differently to things;
- That, in Australia, there are many different reactions to any particular thing depending on where the person lives (major capitals, other cities, towns and rural areas) as well as between states.

Another point which, I believe, has not been considered is that the more words (and therefore complications) that are used to describe something, the more room there is for people to find loopholes in the document or the more likely it is that they will simply ignore it altogether. In formulating the required response, I can find no better model than the Holy Trinity. Look at what God said when He gave Moses the Ten Commandments, when Jesus answered the question “which is the greatest commandment” and how the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles to respond when they were considering the question about what the Gentiles needed to do to become Christians – in every case (and in many of Jesus' other words/responses e.g. “Love One Another”) very few words were used and in every case they left absolutely no room for any doubt or “wriggle room”. Take for example, the fifth

commandment – four words “Thou shalt Not Kill” - short and to the point and with no “wriggle room”; all the above examples and many others in the bible are all short and to the point.

One additional point which is important, where volunteers especially are involved, is that they are VOLUNTEERS - good innocent people - who freely give their time and talents without any reward (in this life) and therefore, if you wish to retain their services, MUST NOT be burned down with loads of bureaucracy (paperwork, meetings, etc.). If this occurs, then some will comply with any requirements no matter what, others will find the loop holes and use them to avoid all unnecessary (and what they know to be useless) activities whilst the majority will decide (quite rightly) that the whole thing is a “load of garbage” simply ignore the lot. If any attempt was to be made to make the second and third groups comply, their response would most likely be to simply give up being a volunteer and if this occurred, the Church in Australia would end up with very few people to do the many jobs which make the Church what it is today. Remember that those who did remain volunteers would soon become worn out. It would also mean that there would be very few new volunteers as most are likely to say that they are happy to help but they are not going to go through all that “load of garbage” just to help out.

With all the above in mind, I believe that the above requirements and the “one size fits all” idea can be achieved by implementing the following two simple statements:-

- All abuse (actual or suspected) MUST be reported to the police. (Remember if abuse is suspected, it must be reported as being “suspected” and any report made in good faith –

irrespective of the outcome – is OK but malicious reports are a criminal offence.)

- All clergy, employees and volunteers MUST obtain and continue to hold a government issued card to enable them to work with children and venerable adults (e.g. a Queensland Blue Card which most people would already have).

Not only would the above achieve these aims, it would make everything very simple and straight forward and so people would not try to get around it, it would save considerable resources and money which could be redirected to far better use, it would simplify checking as well as making it easier for people to become/remain volunteers. Also, it would mean that there was little chance of the offence being covered up and be an added deterrent against abuse. A six monthly reminder of the above points in local parish newsletters would help to keep these requirements in people's minds.

A suitable website should be created – using dot point format – to give people information on recognising abuse and things which will ensure that complaints are not made against them e.g. always have two adults present when working with children, etc.

Finally, there is one question to which needs to be answered. One which I myself hope to never to have to answer and to which I doubt that there is a suitable answer anyway. The question is this “what would you say to God when you stand before him and he says “why did you create a situation on earth which resulted in people who I put on earth to do a job which only they were to do, from continuing to be/becoming workers in my vineyard?”.