

CSAS

# Safeguarding Matters

## Welcome to the 20th issue of Safeguarding Matters

This is the regular Newsletter that CSAS releases to all those within the Church with some responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable groups. Should you have any comments—please email Sally Robinson (sally.robinson@csas.uk.net)

### Organisational Safeguarding Structure for the Religious

Following approval in principle by the Conferences of Bishops and of the Religious, a joint NCSC—CoR project has been commissioned to develop and implement a “one Church” safeguarding structure, suitable to meet the safeguarding responsibilities and requirements of all religious congregations in England and Wales.



The purpose of the project is:

To safeguard those people involved in all aspects of ministry with Religious Congregations in England and Wales, including supporting those affected by ill treatment or abuse.

#### Background History

- ◆ Following the publication of the Nolan Report in 2001, structures were put in place within the Catholic Church in England & Wales to support the protection of children and vulnerable adults within the Catholic community.
- ◆ These structures were set within the Dioceses and were designed to be effective in a Diocesan or parish context. Structures based upon the realities of Religious Congregations and their works were not initially considered.
- ◆ This shortfall was addressed throughout 2005/2006 when the 4 Regional Religious Commissions were established; London Midlands, London South Coast, North East & North West.
- ◆ The intention was that all Religious Congregations would align to either one of these Regional Commissions, or would retain their link with a Diocesan Commission if such a link was in place, or would continue with their own established Commission (e.g. Jesuits, Ampleforth, Buckfast).

#### Why Change is Needed

- ◆ Both the Organisational Safeguarding Structures for the Dioceses and the Religious are being reviewed as part of a cycle of reviews of National Policy agreed by the NCSC, Conference of Bishops and Conference of Religious.
- ◆ Whilst early survey work relating to the Religious Structures has indicated some success, particularly in regard to training delivery and awareness raising with an impressive level of commitment and goodwill and, in places, high levels of knowledge and expertise, it has also highlighted some major concerns and shortfalls.

## Religious Structures continued...

Queensway House  
57 Livery St  
Birmingham  
B3 1HA  
www.csas.uk.net

Phone: 0121 237 3740

Why change is needed—continued from overleaf:

- ◆ A wide disparity of views as to the effectiveness of the current structure was demonstrated across Coordinators, Reps, Commission Chairs and CoR.
- ◆ Data indicated that processes and mechanisms for monitoring safety and minimisation of risk require urgent attention.
- ◆ Resource gaps identified included:-  
Administrative support; Training budget; Coordinator and Rep time; Support for Coordinators and Reps; Support for victims and accused; Supervision for Coordinators; Professional expertise in case management in some Commissions.
- ◆ One Commission has collapsed, one has no Statutory Agency representation and another requires recruitment of a new Chair.
- ◆ Succession planning is a major issue with an ageing cohort of Coordinators who have given over and above what could reasonably have been expected of them over the 4-5 years, with no evidence to suggest younger replacements are readily available.
- ◆ The NCSC non-aligned Religious project has identified a significant number of Congregations that require alignment to a Commission to assist and support them in meeting their safeguarding responsibilities. They cannot be accommodated in the current system.
- ◆ There is a lack of clarity about who holds the authority to ensure all congregations have made appropriate arrangements to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

### Current Proposal

The proposal submitted to the Conferences of Religious and of Bishops was that either:

- ◆ A congregation/s established their own Commission
- ◆ A congregation come under the care of a realigned diocesan based Commission for safeguarding purposes.

Work has now commenced in developing this structure, led by CSAS and a number of task and finish groups will be established to flesh out the proposal with a view to introduction in 2012.

Clearly, there is much work to be done, initially to understand the implications of a new structure in terms of:

- ◆ Resources
- ◆ Ethos
- ◆ Sharing of knowledge and understanding
- ◆ Practical issues (training, risk management, recruitment etc)

We will look to keep you informed as this work progresses. If anyone has an interest in assisting by being a member of a short life task and finish group please email or phone CSAS for more details.

## And finally.....a few CRB reminders

The “National Policy on Roles requiring CRB checks” became obsolete in October 2009 when the basis for CRB eligibility changed. Therefore DO NOT USE this document as it is no longer relevant or accurate.

The term “Volunteer” should NOT be stated in the “Position Applied For”. This field on the CRB form requires explanation of the role and the contact with vulnerable groups.

**The next issue of “Safeguarding Matters” is due out in July 2011**