



# Section 7

**2014 Convention of Synod**

Professional Standards Unit

## **Professional Standards Report LCAQD Synod May 30 – June 1, 2014**

We are all aware of the horrible stories coming from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse. The abuse simply should never have happened. But it seems that often it was made even worse by the Church procedures which treated those who came forward with complaints as somehow trying to hurt or damage the church.

We continue to work hard to put in place appropriate policies that aim to ensure such things never happen in the LCA or LCAQD. Our aim is to listen to all complainants and respond appropriately and compassionately. Sixteen complaints were investigated last year. Eight of these complaints related to people in positions of power verbally or psychologically abusing another person.

An important document we have developed is the “Guidelines for Ethical standards of Behaviour.” We would love to hear from you if you have any comments or suggestions. These guidelines provide clear statements concerning the behaviour that our community can expect from us, the behaviour we expect from anyone wanting to join the Lutheran Church, and the behaviour we expect from each other in the Church. The purpose is not to tell Christians how they must live out their faith (although, of course, we would be happy if these guidelines were to assist anyone not clear on how they should respond to the Gospel), but rather to make it very clear that is the type of behaviour expected of all members, employees, or volunteers of the human organization called the Lutheran Church of Australia.

Towards the end of last year we also developed a Refresher Workshop for those who have attended the first Workshop. In this Workshop there is more of an emphasis on the practical. Attendees will be assisted in actually undertaking a Risk Assessment and evaluating applications for Permission to Proceed. It is also 2 hours shorter than the initial Workshop. We’d like to take this opportunity to remind all Pastors (including Chaplains and active retired Pastors), Lay Workers, employees, elders, pastoral assistants, members of any congregational committees, and all involved in ministry to children and young people that they are required to undergo this training and update every three years.

In 2012 we conducted 14 Professional Standards Workshops and 1 Refresher Workshop with over 200 participants. So far this year there have been 6 Workshops and 2 Refresher Workshops with a total of 100 in attendance.

Again we thank those who are acting as Coordinators for the Safety Management Online system and the Safety Officers working in congregations. Please support and encourage these people as they help in keeping all in our Church safe.

**Liz Crawford**  
**Professional Standards Director**

**Keith Stiller**  
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