Anglican Communion Safe Church Network

Activities since ACC-15

Since its recognition as a Network at ACC-15, the Anglican Communion Safe Church Network (ACSCN) has undertaken the following activities:

(a) its members have shared information with each other about developments in their Province by posting resources on the ACSCN page of the Anglican Communion Office website and communications by listserv;

(b) it has explored with the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa the possibility of holding a regional safeguarding conference in Africa;

(c) it has been considering appropriate steps to implement the Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter throughout the Communion.

Proposals for ACC-16

ACSCN has the following three proposals to implement the Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter at ACC-16:

(a) the Protocol for the disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion;

(b) the establishment of a Commission to promote the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion; and

(c) a process for monitoring the implementation of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter.

Protocol for the disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion

There have been tragic instances where clergy and lay persons known or suspected of having abused people in one Province have moved to another Province without disclosure of this information, and continued to abuse people. The current informal system, where it has operated, has not always ensured that accurate and complete information about such clergy and lay persons has been shared between Provinces. The Protocol is intended to ensure that information as to the suitability for ministry of such clergy and lay persons is shared between Provinces. The rationale for, and text of, the Protocol is set out in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Commission to promote the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion

Not all Provinces have the expertise and resources to take the necessary steps to implement the Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter. The purpose of the Commission is to develop guidelines to enhance the safety of all people especially children, young people and vulnerable adults, within the Provinces of the Anglican Communion for consideration by the Anglican Consultative Council at ACC-17, and thereafter for implementation, as far as practicable, by

each Province of the Anglican Communion. The rationale of, and terms upon which, the Commission is to be established together with a budget for its operation are set out in Appendix 2 of this Report.

Process for monitoring the implementation of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter

To monitor the fulfilment of our commitment expressed in the Anglican Communion Safe Church Charter there should be available to ACC-17 a report from each Province as to its progress in its implementation. The preamble and text of the Charter are set out in Appendix 3 of this Report.

Report submitted by Garth Blake, Convenor of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Network

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Appendix 1

Draft ACC-16 resolution: Protocol for the disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion

Recognising that:

1. Clause 4 of the *Charter for the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion* adopted by the Anglican Consultative Council in October 2012 contains the following commitment:

   "We will have and implement policies and procedures to assess the suitability of persons for ordination as clergy or appointment to positions of responsibility in the church including checking their background."

2. Clergy and lay persons who have undertaken ministry in one Province regularly undertake ministry in another Province.

3. It is essential that those persons or bodies with responsibility for authorising clergy and lay persons to undertake ministry in their Province have accurate and complete information for the assessment of their suitability for ministry from the Province or Provinces in which they have previously been authorised for ministry.

This Council approves the following *Protocol for disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion*, and requests each Province to implement the Protocol and report to the next meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council as to its implementation.

Protocol for the disclosure of ministry suitability information between the churches of the Anglican Communion

Definitions

1. In this Protocol:

"Assessing Province" means the Province in which a Church authority is to assess whether the Church worker should be authorised for ministry;

"Authorising Province" means the Province or Provinces in which the Church worker is authorised, or has previously been authorised, to undertake ministry by a Church authority;

"Church authority" means the person or body responsible for authorising Church workers to undertake ministry in the Authorising Province or the Assessing Province;

"Church worker" means a member of the clergy or a lay person who:

(a) is authorised, or has previously been authorised, to undertake ministry by a Church authority of the Authorising Province; and

(b) has applied to undertake authorised ministry, or has been nominated for appointment to a position or office involving the undertaking of authorised ministry, in the Assessing Province.

"Ministry Suitability Information" means a written statement by a Church authority of the Authorising Province about the Church worker that discloses:

(a) whether or not there has been; and

(b) if so, the substance of;

any allegation, charge, finding or admission of the commission of a criminal offence, or the breach of the Authorising Province's rules regarding the moral conduct of clergy and lay persons undertaking ministry, including rules relating to sexual conduct and conduct towards children and vulnerable adults;

"Province" includes part of a Province.

System for the disclosure of Ministry Suitability Information by the Authorising Province

2. The Authorising Province will have and maintain a system for the disclosure of Ministry Suitability Information about a Church worker of the Province to the applicable Church authority of the Assessing Province that includes the following requirements:

    (a) the applicable Church authority of the Province is to promptly deal with an application by the applicable Church authority of the Assessing Province for the disclosure of Ministry Suitability Information; and

    (b) the applicable Church authority of the Province is to disclose the Ministry Suitability Information to the applicable Church authority of the Assessing Province.

System for assessing the suitability of a Church worker for authorised ministry in the Assessing Province

3. The Assessing Province will have and maintain a system for the assessment of the suitability of a Church worker to undertake authorised ministry in the Province that includes the following requirements:

   (a) the applicable Church authority is to make an application to the Authorising Province for Ministry Suitability Information;

   (b) the applicable Church authority is not to authorise the Church worker to undertake ministry in the Province unless and until it has carried out an assessment of whether the Church worker is a risk to the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare and safety of people that takes into account the Ministry Suitability Information disclosed by the Authorising Province; and

   (c) the applicable Church authority is to keep the Ministry Suitability Information confidential, except where its disclosure:

      (i) is required by law; or
      (ii) is reasonably believed to be necessary to protect any person from the risk of being harmed by the Church worker; or
      (iii) is necessary for the purpose of undertaking the assessment of whether the Church worker is suitable to undertake authorised ministry in the Province or any disciplinary action against the Church worker.

Appendix 2

Proposal for the establishment of a Commission to promote the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion

Background

1. In October 2012 the Anglican Consultative Council at ACC-15 adopted the *Charter for the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion*. As set out in the Charter the witness of Scripture recognises and affirms God's love for all members of the human family and the priority given in Jesus' ministry to children and the vulnerable of society.

2. Since ACC-15 the following developments have highlighted the issue of the safety of children and vulnerable adults in churches:

   (a) in January 2013 the Australian Government established the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse;

   (b) in March 2014 Pope Francis established the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors;

   (c) in July 2014 the Home Secretary of the United Kingdom announced the establishment of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in England and Wales;

(d) in July 2014 Her Honour Judge Sally Cahill QC published her report in relation to the Inquiry into the Church of England's response to child sexual allegations made against Robert Waddington.

3. The continuing disclosure of abuse, particularly sexual abuse, of children and vulnerable adults in many countries by church workers has eroded public trust in churches, including Provinces of the Anglican Communion, as places of safety.

4. To assist in the fulfilment of the commitments expressed in the Charter the Anglican Consultative Council should establish a Commission to promote the safety of people within the churches of the Anglican Communion (Safe Church Commission) upon the terms set out in paragraphs 5 to 16 below.

Safe Church Commission

Terms of reference

5. The Safe Church Commission has the following terms of reference:

   (a) to identify policies and procedures currently in place for the safety of people in the Provinces of the Anglican Communion;

   (b) to develop guidelines to enhance the safety of all people especially children, young people and vulnerable adults, within the Provinces of the Anglican Communion:

      (i) for consideration by the Anglican Consultative Council at ACC-17; and

      (ii) thereafter for implementation, as far as practicable, by each Province of the Anglican Communion.

Membership

6. The Commission will have 13 members appointed by the Secretary General in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury from a Province in the following geographical areas:

   (a) 4 members from Africa and the Middle East:1 from southern Africa; 1 from western Africa; 1 from eastern Africa; 1 from northern Africa and the Middle East;
   (b) 2 members from northern America;
   (c) 1 members from southern America;
   (d) 2 members from Europe;
   (e) 1 member from southern Asia;
   (f) 1 member from south-eastern Asia;
   (g) 1 member from Australia;
   (h) 1 member from Oceania;

7. The chair will be appointed from among the members of the Commission by the Secretary General in consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

8. The members of the Commission should have recognised competence in the protection of children and vulnerable adults, and as far as practicable should be appointed from different Provinces. There should be a gender balance among the members.

9. The term of office of the members of the Commission will expire at the end of ACC-17.

10. Up to 2 persons with recognised competence in the protection of children and vulnerable adults may be co-opted as members of the Commission with the approval of the Secretary General to assist the Commission in undertaking its work.

Method of working

11. The Commission will undertake its work by means of face to face meetings and electronic communications.

12. The Commission may establish working groups in one or more Provinces to assist it in undertaking its work, and for this purpose may collaborate with such persons in each such Province as it considers appropriate.

13. The Commission will endeavour to obtain feedback upon its work including proposed guidelines from the Provinces.

14. The Anglican Communion Office where practicable will provide administrative assistance for the work of the Commission.

Budget

15. The budget of the Commission is £76,745 as set out in the draft budget below.

16. The Secretary General will seek to obtain funding from third parties for the budget of the Commission.

Draft Budget
Proposed Commission to promote safety within the Churches of the Anglican Communion

International Commission

	GBP	**USD**	**Notes**
Flights - delegates	11,700	18,135	13 Persons, say average of £900 per person
Flights - facilitator	900	1,395	1 Person, say average of £900 per person
Flights - support staff	900	1,395	1 Person, say average of £900 per person
Travel - coopted consultants	200	310	2 Persons, local travel say £100 each
Visas	875	1,356	5 persons @ £150 + 5 persons @ £25
Accommodation	6,800	10,540	17 Persons 5 nights, say £80 per night B&B
Meals	1,870	2,899	17 Persons say 4 @ £15 Evening, 5@ £10 lunch
Gala meal	510	791	17 Persons @ £30
	23,755	36,820	
3 meetings	**71,265**	**110,461**	

Regional Commissions

	GBP	**USD**	**Notes**
Flights - regional members	600	930	2 Commission members @ £300
Travel - facilitator	100	155	1 Person, say average of £100 per person
Accommodation - delegates	960	1,488	12 Persons 1 night, say £80 per night B&B
Accommodation - M+F	480	744	3 Persons 2 nights, say £80 per night B&B 2 Members + Facilitator
Meals	480	744	12 Persons say 2 @ £15 Evening, 1@ £10 lunch
Meals	120	186	3 Persons say 2 @ £15 Evening, 1@ £10 lunch 2 Members + Facilitator
	2,740	4,247	

2 meetings		**5,480**	**8,494**
	GBP	**USD**	
Total budget for 5 meetings	**76,745**	**118,955**	

Prepared 23 Sept 2015

Appendix 3

Preamble: Charter for the Safety of People within the Churches of the Anglican Communion

The Anglican Consultative Council recognising and affirming:

(a) the witness of Scripture to God's love for all members of the human family and the priority given in Jesus' ministry to children and the vulnerable of society;

(b) the resolution of the Lambeth Conference in 1998 that each member Church represented make an intentional effort to work toward eliminating abuses affecting women and children (Resolution 1.3);

(c) the commitment of the Anglican Consultative Council in 2005 to the highest standards of care for all young and vulnerable people, seeking to ensure their protection (ACC Resolution 13.50);

(d) the testimony of the Lambeth Conference in 2008 to the many forms of abuse of power within society as well as the church from which women and children suffer disproportionately, and the challenge to reclaim the gospel truth of the dignity of the human person and to exercise power in ways that would always be life giving (Lambeth Indaba: Capturing Conversations and Reflections, paragraphs 47 to 50);

(e) the call of the Anglican Consultative Council in 2009 to member Churches to take appropriate steps to assist the healing of indigenous families, including the protection of women and children from violence and human trafficking (ACC Resolutions 14.19 and 14.33);

(f) the statement of the Primates in 2011 that our churches must accept responsibility for our own part in perpetuating oppressive attitudes towards women, and in penitence and faith we must move forward in such a way that our churches truly become a living witness to our belief that both women and men are made in the image of God (Letter to the Churches of the Anglican Communion);

commits itself to promoting the physical, emotional and spiritual welfare and safety of all people, especially children, young people and vulnerable adults, within the member churches of the Anglican Communion, and to this end calls upon all member churches to adopt and implement the *Charter for the Safety of People within the Churches of the Anglican Communion*, and report to the next meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council as to steps taken to adopt and implement the Charter.

Charter for the Safety of People within the Churches of the Anglican Communion

Pastoral support where there is abuse

1. We will provide pastoral support for the abused, their families, and affected parishes and church organizations by:

(a) listening with patience and compassion to their experiences and concerns;

(b) offering spiritual assistance and other forms of pastoral care.

Effective responses to abuse

2. We will have and implement policies and procedures to respond properly to allegations of abuse against clergy and other church personnel that include:

   (a) making known within churches the procedure for making complaints;

   (b) arranging pastoral care for any person making a complaint of abuse;

   (c) the impartial determination of allegations of abuse against clergy and other church personnel, and assessment of their suitability for future ministry;

   (d) providing support for affected parishes and church organizations.

Practice of pastoral ministry

3. We will adopt and promote by education and training standards for the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and other church personnel.

Suitability for ministry

4. We will have and implement policies and procedures to assess the suitability of persons for ordination as clergy or appointment to positions of responsibility in the church including checking their background.

Culture of safety

5. We will promote a culture of safety in parishes and church organizations by education and training to help clergy, other church personnel and participants prevent the occurrence of abuse.