



Media Release

5 March 2019

Independent Safeguarding Panels appointed in Broken Bay

In September 2018, the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay officially launched its Diocesan Office for Safeguarding, an initiative commenced under the leadership of former Bishop, Most Rev Peter A Comensoli. This significant development marked the first stage of a new structure for the safeguarding of children and those who are vulnerable within the Diocesan community, drawing together the valuable work being done in safeguarding, child protection and professional standards across Chancery, Parishes, Catholic Schools and CatholicCare Broken Bay.

“As a Diocese, we are committed to a practice of leadership which is inclusive and professional, and which strives for a healthy culture of responsibility, accountability and transparency,” said Fr David Ranson, Diocesan Administrator.

“An essential element, particularly in the areas of accountability and transparency, is the engagement of independent expertise. To this purpose I am very pleased to announce, on behalf of the Diocese, the appointment of two independent Panels: **The Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel** and the **Diocesan Safeguarding Panel of Review** which will commence operation from March 2019.”

Comprising seven members, and under the Chairmanship of Mr Garth Blake AM SC (Barrister, Senior Counsel and member of the Safe Church Network of the National Council of Churches), the **Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel**, will bring national and international policy and best practice advice to Diocesan endeavours. Fellow members include Professor Darryl Higgins (Director of the Institute for Child Protection Studies (ACU)), Professor Ilan Katz (Researcher Social Policy Research Centre UNSW), Sr Maree Marsh csb (Member of the Truth Justice and Healing Council and co-Chair of Kildare Ministries), Ms Lyn Ainsworth (Executive Director of CatholicCare, Diocese of Broken Bay) and Mr Peter Hamill (Director, Catholic Schools Office Broken Bay). Director for the Diocesan Office for Safeguarding, Ms Jodie Crisafulli will also be present on both Panels.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Strategic Advisory Panel met for the first time last Friday 1 March 2019 and will meet quarterly each year.

Our Diocesan Safeguarding commitment will also be informed by the **Diocesan Safeguarding Review Panel**, comprising five members, which will provide independent evaluation of the redress the Diocese seeks to provide to those who have suffered abuse. Membership is drawn from expertise in the areas of canon law; family law; social work - particularly with children and families; trauma management and counselling; and healing and support for survivors of abuse.

For further information regarding **Safeguarding in the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay** please visit: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/our-faith/safeguarding>

For anyone who has suffered abuse and is seeking counselling, support or advice, please contact:

Lifeline - 24-hour crisis support on 13 11 14

Relationships Australia NSW - family, relationship and specialised counselling on 1800 052 674 or 1300 364 277

Knowmore – independent service providing legal advice and information on options about compensation, redress and other legal issues relating to institutional child sexual abuse
1800 605 762

For more information regarding this Media Release, contact Melissa Loughlin, Manager, Office for Communications, Ph 8379 1618 or email melissa.loughlin@bbcatholic.org.au