



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the religious congregation of
The Franciscan Friars of Renewal

undertaken by

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the
Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)

Date January 2016

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Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Irish Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union, to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland.

The NBSCCCI is aware that some religious congregations have ministries that involve direct contact with children while others do not. In religious congregations that have direct involvement with children, reviews of child safeguarding have been undertaken by measuring their practice compliance against all seven Church standards. Where a religious congregation no longer has, or never had ministry involving children and has not received any allegation of sexual abuse, the NBSCCCI reviews are conducted using a shorter procedure. The size, age and activity profiles of religious congregations can vary significantly and the NBSCCCI accepts that it is rational that the form of review be tailored to the profile of each Church authority, where the ministry with children is limited or non-existent. The procedure for assessment of safeguarding practice with such congregations is set out in the contents page of this report. The NBSCCCI welcomes that in order to have full openness, transparency and accountability, religious congregations that do not have ministry with children have made requests to have their safeguarding practice examined and commented upon.

The purpose of this review remains the same and it is to confirm that current safeguarding practice complies with the standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009 *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each of these Church Authorities is reviewed through an examination of policy and procedures, and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to the religious congregation.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Child Safeguarding Practice in the religious congregation of the Franciscan Friars of Renewal* undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group before being submitted to Fr Columba, Local Servant in Derry and Fr Charles, Local Servant in Limerick, along with any recommendations arising from the findings. The review is not based on a review of case material as during the relevant time period there were no allegations made against members of the congregation that were within the Terms of Reference. There also were no allegations in respect of other forms of abuse within the time period, in respect of deceased and living members of the congregation. The review therefore is primarily based on policies and procedures made available plus interviews with key personnel involved in the safeguarding process within the congregation, particularly in the services run by the congregation.

Introduction

The Community of Franciscan Friars of the Renewal was begun in 1987 by eight Capuchin friars desiring to work more definitively for personal and communal reform within the Catholic Church. The life and apostolate of the friars are rooted in the ideals and spirit of the Capuchin reform born in the early 16th century. The community began in 1987 with eight friars; today there are more than one hundred and twenty in USA, Europe and Central America.

The primary mission of the Community of Franciscan Friars is to embrace Jesus Christ and Saint Francis. Through their commitment to prayer and contemplation, the study of Sacred Scripture, and their fidelity to the Church and the Sacraments, their fraternal life, and their service to others, especially the poor, in line with St Francis and the Capuchin tradition.

The vocation of the Franciscan Friars of Renewal, as disciples of Jesus Christ, is to strive both individually and communally to become authentic men of prayer. Prayer is the heart of their way of life. Through personal and liturgical prayer, recitation of the Divine Office, daily Eucharistic adoration, and the rosary recited in common, all their offerings and work aim for an intimate union with God.

One of their apostolic missions is to serve the materially poor, most especially the destitute and homeless. By living in poor neighborhoods, running homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and youth programs, friars strive to fulfill the command of the gospel and Saint Francis to live among the poor, providing for their physical and spiritual needs.

In addition their mission of evangelization in the Church is through preaching and teaching the Holy Gospel. Some expressions of this apostolate are: providing missionary centers for the poor, street evangelization, parish missions, young adult retreats, college missions, and days of recollection, pilgrimages, Youth 2000 retreats, and sacramental ministry.

There have been Franciscan Friars of Renewal in Ireland since August 2007, when the congregation opened St Patrick friary in Moyross, Limerick, at the invitation of Bishop Donal Murray, Emeritus Bishop of Limerick. The Franciscan Friars in Limerick now reside in three council houses merged together, and have an apostolic centre in a different house further down the street. Over the years, the number of friars assigned to the friary varied between 4 to 6.

In Northern Ireland, Bishop Seamus Hegarty, the Emeritus Bishop of Derry invited the Congregation to minister in the city of Derry in furtherance of their apostolic aims, of evangelization and outreach to the needy in the city and Diocese. In Derry Diocese, the friars initially ministered in Longtower parish, where amongst other things, they supported the ministry of the Nazareth Sisters. In 2013, they were asked to move to Galliagh, an impoverished part of the city. They did as requested and now live and minister out of parish property in St Joseph's parish. In addition to assisting with masses and other liturgies organised by the parish, the Franciscan friars in Derry have their own liturgies, prayer services and outreach ministry to young people and families.

Role Profile (past and present role with children):

As a relatively new congregation, both since its inception in 1987 and as communities in Ireland, the Franciscan Friars are still developing their ministries. That said it is clear that their ministries are inextricably linked with the poor, the marginalized and the vulnerable. In both Limerick and in Derry, the communities are located in large city estates where the Friars work on a daily basis with children, young people, families and adults in need.

Limerick:

In 2008 the Franciscan Friars of the renewal in Limerick founded the “John Paul II Youth Club” (commonly known as the JP2 Club). This centre provides been a place where the youth of Moyross, Limerick can be welcomed and feel safe and accepted. The Franciscan Friars advise that the centre which is located in Delmege Park, was formerly known as one of Limerick's toughest neighborhoods; the Friars add that the JP2 Centre has proved to be a catalyst for real change not only on the streets, but also in the hearts and minds of the young people in Moyross. Clearly there is a religious aspect to this ministry, which the Friars state that “all are welcomed as children of our Heavenly Father and challenged to heed the call to “live life to the full” in Jesus Christ”.

In Limerick the following programmes are provided by the Friars:

JP 11 Centre

The John Paul II the Great Catholic Centre is fully equipped with an all-weather pitch with soccer goals and a basketball goal. They also have a classroom facility with DVD projection, a full kitchen, and a newly built chapel extension with the Blessed Sacrament reserved. JP11 Youth Club meets weekly on Thursday night 7:30 to 9:00 to “hang out”, listen to contemporary Christian music, play sports, eat, pray, and have interactive faith sharing. Recent series include: Gospel of Luke, JP11's Theology of the Body for Teens, and the Teen Catechism. JP2 Youth Club also sponsors a very popular “Movie Night” once a month showing films with positive messages and Christian themes.

Good Shepherd Club - Tuesday afternoon 3:00 to 4:30

“Good Shepherd” after school program is for youth ages 6 -11 years. A weekly after schools program to play sports, have interactive Bible/Catechism teaching, arts & crafts, prayer, and food.

Homework Help Club - Tuesday afternoon 4:30 to 5:30

“Homework Help” club offers the same children the opportunity to receive help with their school work

DTS - Friday night 7:30 to 9:00 pm

“Dead Theologian Society” is a world-wide youth ministry reaching teens with the Good News through the lives of the saints. A former youth of the JP2 Club now coordinates the DTS meetings in Limerick every week.

The JP2 Center relies heavily on volunteers, to assist with the programmes.

Summer Life camp

The JP2 Youth Center offers each year a two-week Summer Life camp in July for the “Good Shepherd” group, with the “JP2” youth assisting and working alongside the Friars. They offer regular trips out of the city. They also organize activities such as treasure hunts, scouting

days, soccer tournaments and daily Mass.

Trips, Outings, Retreats

The youth at JP2 Youth Center have offered opportunities to travel to:

- Pilgrimages to Germany, Medjugorje, and World Youth Day in Madrid, Spain.
- Between 4 -5 residential retreats a year (Youth 2000, Avoca, Knock)
- Mountain climbing in Dingle, Wicklow, Croagh Patrick
- Visiting Craig Lodge Community, Scotland as well as Youth ministry training in the U.S.A.

In Limerick there are other activities for adults: Bible studies on Tuesday night, cooking club on Wednesday and prayer group at the friary on Thursday night. The Friars visit families, bless houses in Moyross and other parts of the city.

For the past couple of years, the number of persons asking prayers, confession, advices and counselling has increased significantly; most of the time this ministry takes place in the parlor of the Friary.

On a daily bases, the children of the immediate neighborhood come to the door asking for a biscuit or a sweet or a drink. The Local Servant advises that they are not allowed in the friary without the physical presence of one of the parents or legal guardian.

As noted above the Limerick Friars have significant ministry with children. For this role, all the friars are vetted as soon as they arrive and then at the start of every school year. The same applies to their volunteers. Annually at the start of the school year, they have a session with volunteers dedicated to child protection.

The reviewer was advised that the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in Limerick work closely with the Diocese of Limerick, adhering to the diocesan safeguarding policies and procedures. There the Friars did have a "working child safeguarding document" which will imminently be replaced by the revised *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* in 2016.

The Congregation maintains an Apostolic Centre in Limerick which has some activities for children. Outside of this, the three priests and two brothers within the Limerick friary, while in active ministry, have no other specific contact with children.

Derry:

In Derry the community has two aims to its ministry:

1. Outreach ministry with young people.
2. Ministry to local families.

In relation to their ministry with children and young people, the Franciscan Friars have begun this work within St. Brigid's Secondary School in Galliagh; where one priest and one Brother regularly assist. Youth initiatives run a weekly youth group for 11-14 year olds in the parish hall; one priest attends that group. The other priests and religious Brother are involved in other ministries; mostly involving home visits and ministry to people who attend the community house seeking help. The reviewer was advised that both within school ministry and other diocesan youth ministry, all activities are initiated by the school or diocese

and not by the community. The community of Friars is invited to participate in the activities and as such is bound by and follows the child safeguarding policy and procedures of the organizing body. In addition the Friars are asked to run retreats, parish missions and other youth activities. On all occasions the organising body is responsible for all aspects of child safeguarding, to which the Franciscan Friars agree to follow.

The ministry to children also involves significant contact with children, both in the homes of the children and in the community house.

In Derry, while the friars do not have a dedicated child safeguarding policy, they follow that of the Diocese of Derry and are clear in relation to their code of conduct and not having any unsupervised contact with children.

Profile of Members:

The Superior General of the Franciscan Friars of Renewal is based in New York. He is responsible worldwide for all Friars. In Europe there are 4 community houses, two in England and two in Ireland – Derry and Limerick.

Limerick

In Limerick there are 5 friars, 3 priests and 2 brothers. All are in final vows except one of the brothers who will make final vow this summer 2016.

The Local Servant is finishing his first 3 years term as the local servant but has been living in Limerick since the summer 2010. His vicar has been assigned to this friary for two and a half years. Two other friars have been in Limerick since September 2014 and the last one just arrived in 2015.

Three of the members are from USA, one is Irish and the Local Servant is from France. While the community houses are independent of each other, the structure regarding formation and structure is very similar. While the friars in Limerick work closely with the Diocese of Limerick regarding safeguarding, they do not provide sacramental duties to a parish.

Derry

In the Derry community house there are 5 friars; three are ordained priests and two vowed brothers. They range in age between 38 and 50. Two of the friars are from Ireland, two from USA and one from France. The community has a Local Servant and vicar. It is these two friars who would deal with any child safeguarding matters, in close association with the Derry Diocesan Safeguarding Co-coordinator and designated liaison person. All friars underwent their formation in USA. The priests receive faculties to minister from the Cardinal of New York. They receive continuous formation both in Ireland and in USA. To minister in Derry the friars have been vetted through Derry Diocese and the priests have celebretts to demonstrate that they are priests in good standing.

The Local Servant is elected for 3 years and the current leader in Derry is in his second term of office, this may extend to a third term, or a new leader may be appointed by the Superior General who is based in USA.

Policy and Procedures Document:

As already noted The Franciscan Friars of Renewal in Ireland do not have a dedicated child safeguarding policy and procedures document. In Limerick, they provide a significant range of youth ministries and follow the Limerick Diocese Safeguarding Policy, while in Derry as they work entirely under the direction of others – Derry Diocese or schools; they adopt the policy and procedures of that body. Given the closeness of the review to the adoption of a one Church policy in Ireland, the reviewer is not making a recommendation about developing a Franciscan Friars policy document. It is important however that the community houses display their policy and contact details of safeguarding personnel in the statutory sector and Diocese in which they work.

Recommendation 1:

The Local Servants must display the relevant Diocesan Child Safeguarding poster in their community houses which advises the reader of their policy statement and contact details for personnel, if someone wishes to make a complaint of a child safeguarding nature

Structures:

The two communities in Ireland are small but autonomous; each has a Local Servant who takes lead responsibility for child safeguarding. The Local Servants in Ireland and England liaise regularly and offer each other support.

In Limerick, the Local Servant fulfils the child safeguarding role within their community, with support from the Diocesan Safeguarding Coordinator. Training is provided by the Diocese of Limerick, and all safeguarding matters are deferred to the diocesan safeguarding structures.

In Derry, four of the five Friars, have been trained by the Derry Diocese in child safeguarding. Currently the diocese does not have an accredited trainer, but the Local Servant has liaised with the Child Safeguarding Coordinator to ensure that training will be provided. The Local Servant also gave a commitment to adopting the revised Church policy and attending induction scheduled in March 2016.

Management of Allegations and liaison with the statutory authorities:

There have not been any allegations against any Franciscan Friar ministering in Derry or in Limerick.

One Friar in Limerick dealt with an allegation from a child; he passed this through to the Limerick diocesan designated liaison person who notified An Garda Síochána and TUSLA.

One Friar in Derry received a disclosure from a child at school about other children who may have been at risk of harm. This was passed to the designated person in the school and dealt with by the school.

Conclusion:

There are two small communities of Franciscan Friars living and ministering in Ireland, one in Limerick and one in Derry. Their mission is to work with the marginalised and poor in the localities in which they live. The communities follow the local diocesan child safeguarding

policies and procedures and have agreed to adopt the revised national policy and standards. The Local Servants will attend the national inductions in February and March 2016.

The allegations received by friars within both communities were appropriately dealt with by other church body/agency.

Given the location and ministry of the two communities and their contact with children, it is appropriate that details about their child safeguarding policy and how to access civil authority agencies is displayed prominently in the community houses. The following recommendation has been made to capture this issue:

Recommendation 1:

The Local Servants must display the relevant diocesan Child Safeguarding poster in their community houses which advises the reader of their policy statement and contact details for personnel, if someone wishes to make a complaint of a child safeguarding nature.

Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

Terms of Reference (which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes)

Small Religious Congregations

Introduction

In order for the National Board to be able to state that all Church Authorities on the island of Ireland have been evaluated in respect of their child safeguarding policies and practices, both historical and current, then some form of appropriate assessment has to be conducted of every one of these. It is rational however that the form of assessment is tailored to the profile of each Church Authority, and that needless expenditure of resources and unnecessary interference in the life of religious orders and communities that have no children-specific ministry would be avoided.

This Review seeks to examine the current arrangements for safeguarding children across small Religious Congregations /Orders, and Missionary Societies in Ireland who have limited or no direct contact with children as part of the Congregations ministry.

It would also scrutinize practice within all known cases to ensure that they have been responded to appropriately.

The review's methodology is an adaptation of the methodology developed for all Dioceses and large religious congregations and missionary societies, where the ministry involves regular contact with children.

The proposed Review would consider the following:-

- (a) Former role with children
- (b) Allegations of child abuse against members and how these have been responded to
- (c) Existing relationships with statutory authorities such as the HSE, Gardai in the Republic and the HSCT or PSNI in Northern Ireland.
- (d) Policies in place and being applied for safeguarding children
- (e) Roles and responsibilities and where they exist the operation of Advisory Panels, and Safeguarding Committees

The objective of the Review would be to confirm if there have been any allegations and how known allegations have been responded to; in addition the review seeks to confirm what the current arrangements for safeguarding children are. In particular, emphasis will be placed on establishing how policies and practice matches up to the standards set down in the Safeguarding Children Guidance published by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church launched in February 2009. Priority, at all times, will be given to how policy and practice can be improved and strengthened. If policies and/or practices are identified that are concerning, inadequate, or dangerous, they will be addressed through the provision of guidance and support, and through the reporting of these situations to the appropriate statutory authorities, if this has not already happened. Similarly, those that are good examples will be highlighted with a view to them being adopted comprehensively across all parts of the Church. All cases that relate to alleged or known offenders that are alive will be read and included in the Review. In cases where the alleged or known offender

is deceased, these will be sampled in an attempt to gather learning from them that will be used to inform the framing of recommendations.

Guidance Documents

The Review will be guided by the following:-

- (a) Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance;
- (b) Children First Guidance in ROI; and Regional Child Protection Guidelines in Northern Ireland;
- (c) Legislation that exists in each jurisdiction which contributes to safeguarding children and young people.

The Review will be undertaken by the National Board for Safeguarding Children through their National Office and led by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Review process will be overseen by a **Reference Group** to whom the CEO will report on a regular basis. The membership of this **Reference Group** has been drawn from each of the statutory child protection agencies in both jurisdictions, along with eminent individuals in the field from academia. The current Reference Group consists of : Dr Helen Buckley (TCD); Mr Paul Harrison (Tusla), and John Toner (SBNI).

It is important to confirm that the value of the Review is dependent upon full and complete access to all relevant documentation and information relating to the abuse of children known to the individual Church authorities. The Review will proceed on the basis that willingness exists on the part of each of the subjects of the Review to provide full access to the fieldwork team, subject, where relevant, to the terms of the Data Processing Deed agreed between the Sponsoring Bodies and entered into between the parties hereto.

Step Guide to the Review Process

Step 1.

A letter of invitation to review is sent by the Provincial/Regional Superior or other person responsible for the Congregation/ Order or Missionary Society (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Ordinary’).

Step 2.

The CEO will forward a survey to the provincial which will identify:

- Current number of members
- Past role with children
- Current role with children
- Total number of allegations received up to 2014
- Number of living members against whom there are allegations

Step 3.

For any Order where there have been allegations a full review will proceed, as per step 4 - 23. For those Orders where there have been no known allegations a desk top examination of policies and procedures will take place followed by a site visit to interview all relevant personnel within the safeguarding structure. For these orders **step 5 and 13-23** will apply.

Step 4.

The CEO and Ordinary will confirm the dates for the fieldwork for the Review, and names of the fieldwork team.

Step 5.

The Church Authority will be asked to make available all of the case files and related documentation in respect of any safeguarding concerns that have been identified within the diocese. The Church Authority will make available a room with wireless internet access for the reviewers to conduct their review of files, so that any records made by the reviewers can be directly typed and stored onto a secure server which is only accessed by the reviewers. In the absence of internet access the reviewers will type their notes onto a secure encrypted usb stick for later uploading onto the secure server.

Step 6.

The Church Authority will be requested to sign the revised Data Processing Deed prior to the arrival of the team.

Step 7.

The Church Authority will arrange a schedule of interviews with all who hold safeguarding roles within its functional area. The designated person and the Church Authority will be available to the reviewers throughout the period of fieldwork.

Step 8.

The fieldwork team when they arrive on site will firstly confirm that they have a suitable place to work in and that all the required documentation has been provided to them for their Review. In the event that the fieldwork team forms the opinion that the Church Authority has not provided access to all such documents, the Board shall give notice in writing to the Church Authority of the opinion of the fieldwork team and such notice shall specify the reasons for same. Thereupon, the Church Authority shall respond in detail to the Notice. Each party shall use its best endeavours to resolve any differences of opinion which shall arise and, in the event that resolution is not arrived at, the parties will attempt to resolve the dispute by recourse to the services of a mediator agreed between them or nominated for the purpose at the request of any of them without prejudice to the Board's entitlement to terminate the Review. In the event that resolution has not been arrived at following mediation, either party shall be at liberty to terminate forthwith the Review.

Step 9.

On arrival, the fieldwork team should be supplied with a single case file index that lists all the cases that have been created within the diocese. These may be divided into two groups. The first group will contain all allegations that relate to living alleged or known perpetrators. The second will contain any that are deceased.

Step 10.

Depending on the volume involved a decision should be made as to whether all or a random sample of the "deceased group" should be reviewed. Care should be taken to include all prominent cases in the sample.

Step 11.

Each case file will be reviewed by each fieldworker independently in the first instance. They will create a written summary with chronological information of the case. In certain cases a second reader may be required, this will be discussed and agreed between the fieldworkers.

Step 12.

Following the reading of the case and the creation of a summary, the fieldworkers will analyse and assess the actions taken in the case. They will assess compliance with agreed Church policy that was extant at that time. They will also indicate whether any current risk exists in respect of the information contained within the file and advise the church Authority of necessary safeguarding action to reduce the risk.

Step 13.

When all the case files have been read, the fieldwork team will then examine and review any procedures or protocols that exist within the diocese to confirm that they are in compliance with the *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance* document issued by the NBSCCCI in February of 2009.

Step 14.

To complete the Review, the fieldwork team will then seek to speak to those directly involved in the safeguarding structure in the diocese. This should include the Advisory Panel, a sample of parish safeguarding representatives, the designated person, the safeguarding committee, victim support and advisors and the Bishop/Provincial. The purpose of these interviews is to form a view of the competence and effectiveness of the safeguarding structure that exists within the Church Authority.

Step 15.

The fieldwork team will also seek to speak to representatives of the key statutory agencies to provide them with an opportunity to express their views on the quality of the working relationships that exist between them and the Church Authority.

Step 16.

A verbal feedback session on initial key findings will be given to the Church Authority.

Step 17.

Upon completion of the field work, the team may request to take materials – other than casework records to review off-site; this alongside all materials gathered by the reviewers, including written notes on cases and meetings, will be analysed and will form the basis of the draft assessment review report.

Step 18.

The draft will be forwarded to the Church Authority for factual accuracy checking.

Step 19.

Alongside all other reports under review, the report will be presented in draft to the Reference Group for their critique and comment. If further work is required at the direction of the Reference group the CEO will ensure this work is completed and advise the Church Authority accordingly.

Step 20.

The report will be legally proofed by NBSCCCI lawyer.

Step 21.

The report will be forwarded to the National Board for approval

Step 22

A final draft report will then be submitted to the Church Authority. The expectation would be that the Report will be published by the Church Authority at an agreed time in the future.

Step 23.

All case material written, including summaries, as part of the review, which are for the reviewers use only, will be stored on a secure server.

Guide for Reviewers

In terms of small (female religious orders) reference should be made to the following:

1. Has the Order provided alternative care to children in an orphanage, industrial school or children's residential home, but no longer is engaged in running such services;
2. Has the order provided education to children, in both or either boarding schools and day schools, but no longer does so ;
3. Has the order provided medical and/or nursing services to children, but no longer does so;
4. Has the order provided any other services to children, in community services centres, youth clubs etc., and no longer does so;
5. Does the order currently provide any sort of service to children and families that brings them into regular contact with children;
6. Has the order never provided any service to children (e.g. contemplative orders).

In relation to category 1 above;

1. The reviewers will establish whether any service they provided is included in the list of children's residential services produced by the Residential Institutions Redress Board (RIRB);
2. If this is the case, reference should be made to this.
3. If complaints have been referred to the Redress Board or Ryan Commission, this review cannot access these records and that will be stated in the report.
4. If the order has received complaints which have not been processed through Redress or Ryan these cases will be thoroughly examined as detailed above.

Review of Policy and Procedures

1. It is recognised that not all Orders will have any ministry with children and therefore their policies and procedures should reflect the work that they do with children.
2. If the Order only works through other organisations, example in Diocesan work or in schools, they are required to follow the policies of those organisations.
3. If there are gaps in the policy document an assessment should be made as to whether the ministry engaged in requires full compliance with all criteria attached to the seven standards
4. Where it is clear that the criteria do not apply a reference should be made at the beginning of the review report that the Order's ministry is not directly with children and therefore adherence to particular criteria do not apply.
5. In the Order is a contemplative Order, there is no expectation that they will have detailed policies and procedures, but reference should be made to their ministry and that they have no contact with children.
6. In all cases, contact will be made with the civil authorities to identify if they have any child safeguarding concerns in relation to the order.