



Overview of the Safeguarding Practice from 4th Tranche of Reviews conducted in the Arch Dioceses of Armagh and Cashel and Emlly; the **Dioceses of Achonry; Down and Connor; Kerry and Ossory; St Patrick's** Missionary Society, Kiltegan and the Congregation of Christian Brothers.

December 2013

In May 2013, the fieldwork into the 4th tranche of safeguarding reviews began. Included in this tranche were 6 Dioceses and 1 Religious Congregation; included in this overview report are the findings of those reviews and those relating to St Patrick's Missionary Society which was reviewed earlier in the year as part of the 3rd tranche. The fieldwork part of the reviews was conducted by reviewers employed by NBSCCCI and took place over a 2/3/4/5 day period between May 2013 and September 2013.

The purpose of the reviews is set out in the Terms of Reference which was agreed by the Bishops Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union in June 2010.

As with all other reviews, the process was initiated through the signing of a data processing deed which allowed the exchange of information with the NBSCCCI and was overseen by a Reference group made up of Dr Helen Buckley, TCD; Paul Harrison, HSE and John Toner, independent consultant and chair of safeguarding trust boards in Northern Ireland.

Each Review report is an assessment of local policy and practice against the Church's seven standards, followed by recommendations for improvements to practice as appropriate. The terms of reference are clear in stating that in terms of allegations that the concentration is on current risk, in other words the

reviewers read files relating to living priests/brothers. The Reviews involved a time period from 1st January 1975 to the period of the Review.

Key Findings of the Reviews

The fourth tranche shows steady progress across all standards and especially in relation to reporting allegations to the civil authorities. Prior to 2008, when “Safeguarding Children”, Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland were endorsed as the Church standards, the practice of reporting all allegations to the civil authorities was sporadic. From the records it is clear that up to 2008 there were long delays in reporting allegations against living priests/brothers and that, allegations against deceased priests and brothers were not systematically reported. There has been significant improvement and it is now practice across all diocese and orders that all allegations are promptly reported. As will be noted from the individual reports, the follow-up church inquiries were either slowly instituted or in many cases not instituted at all, leaving complainants and respondent priests/brothers in limbo in criminally non adjudicated cases.

The overall findings include:

- There were a large number of allegations and evidence in the files to support that there were significant numbers of children abused by priests and Religious. It is important that everyone recognises the extent of the abuse of children. In total there were 1140 allegations made. (this does not constitute 1140 victims – as there may have been multiple allegations from 1 person; in addition these figures are not confirmed figures of abuse)
- In one example, unacceptable in terms on a complete failure to act appropriately to allegations, – men remained in ministry and children were placed at risk; and non-adherence to any policies was evident until relatively recently
- Response to victims is still inconsistent and often not addressed at all
- Delays in reporting up until 2008, now prompt reporting, particularly good reporting in Dioceses and in some instances for a number of years dating back to early 1990s before any Church guidance

- Canon law processes are not well understood, so there is drift in cases which were not criminally adjudicated on.
- Concerns about lack of State follow through on non-adjudicated men.
- Best examples of overall good safeguarding practice and management of allegations are where the Bishop/Provincial personally gets involved alongside the lay designated person.
- A developing culture of safeguarding is being embedded.
- Good interagency working in all cases and some examples of helpful support from the civil authorities in assessing and managing risk.
- Need much greater monitoring of visiting and retired priests
- Good examples of engaging children in the developing of child friendly policies, and codes of behaviour.
- Further need to develop risk management plans for men out of ministry

Total number of 1143 allegations; 223 against Diocesan priests

Total number of accused priests/brothers: 456; of which 117 are Diocesan priests

Total number of convictions: 21 (20 at the time of the reviews, 1 has subsequently been convicted)

A series of recommendations have been made within each report and there is an expectation that these will be developed into plans of action. NBSCCCI will request an update on progress of implementation of recommendations in 9 months.

Finally it is important that complainants come forward if there are still unreported allegations of abuse; NBSCCCI encourages reporting to the Diocese/Religious Order and to the civil authorities.

NBSCCCI also would encourage anyone who has suffered abuse to contact Towards Healing, Counselling and Support Service for survivors of Clerical and Religious abuse, funded by the Catholic Church.

Contact details are:

Towards Healing – Click to visit the website : www.towardshealing.ie

Free phone 1800303416 (Rep.of Ireland) Free phone 0800 0963315 (Northern Ireland)

Archdiocese of Armagh

Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly

Diocese of Achonry

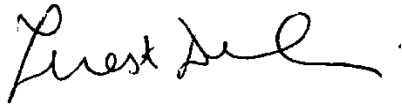
Diocese of Down and Connor

Diocese of Kerry

Diocese of Ossory

Christian Brothers

St Patrick's Missionary Society (Kiltegan Fathers)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Devlin'.

Teresa Devlin
Interim CEO