1. **Background**

The National Protocol Responding to Concerns and Allegations of Abuse (the Protocol) is a work of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA). The Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) was given the responsibility to draft the Protocol for review and approval by ACBC and CRA.

The ACBC-CRA Liaison Group (the Liaison Group) is mandated by ACBC and CRA to assist the IAG in its task and to represent the requirements of ACBC and CRA to IAG in respect to the development of further drafts of the Protocol.

The Liaison Group is to work with the Protocol working party established by IAG and with the authors of the Protocol to propose a 4th version of the Protocol, respectful of the requirements of ACBC and CRA which have commissioned the Protocol. Drawing upon the expertise and experience of its members in the care of victims and survivors, the handling of complaints of abuse, canon and civil law, ecclesiology, safeguarding, professional standards and governance, the Liaison Group will extend and complement the IAG Protocol Working Party.

Prior to the ACBC Plenary in November 2020, IAG and Liaison Group will jointly propose a 4th version of the Protocol to ACBC and CRA,

The entrustment, publication and implementation of the 4th version of the Protocol, if approved in principle by ACBC and CRA, will be determined by ACBC-CRA in due time.

2. **Membership**

The members of the Liaison Group are jointly appointed by ACBC and CRA. They are:

- Very Rev Peter Blayney EV PP
- Ms Nicki Patten
- Very Rev David Ranson VG PP (Chair)
- Dr Tanja Stojadinovic

3. **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Protocol is a work of ACBC-CRA which retain governance of the project.

With the Liaison Group now established to work with IAG which had been commissioned to formulate the Protocol, decisions in respect to changes and additions in the Protocol will be mutually determined and the tasks of amending and rewriting the draft and feedback analysis will be shared as mutually considered.
4. **Purposes**

The Liaison Group shall in conjunction with the IAG Protocol Working Party:

i) Consider feedback and advice of ACBC CRA, Association of Ministerial Public Juridic Persons, Australian Catholic Centre for Professional Standards, State Professional Standards Offices, and diocesan and religious institute professional standards (and/or safeguarding) offices concerning the 3rd version of the Protocol and seek further consultation as considered appropriate;

ii) Clarify the history, context and principles in the 3rd version of the Protocol.

iii) Work with the authors to correct, clarify and complete the procedures in a 4th version of the Protocol with a view to there being a single document which addresses the requirements of ACBC and CRA which have commissioned the Protocol for their own purposes, namely that the Protocol be:
   a. Introduced by an appropriate ecclesiology reflecting the draft as a document of the Church as a faith-based entity;
   b. Inclusive of a section on the Church’s national commitment to Safeguarding and the responsibilities therein;
   c. Inclusive of all complainants and survivors of abuse including children, vulnerable persons and adults in the most effective manner to be determined;
   d. Integrative of the requirements of the Motu Proprio Vos estis lux mundi, as well as well as the other requirements of civil law and canon law, in a manner that is best determined;
   e. Inclusive of sections related to the support of
      i. Those against whom allegations are made
      ii. Communities affected by allegations
   f. Referential to the development of the National Office for Safeguarding and its structures, nationally and regionally, and particularly in respect to mechanisms of review and appeal;
   g. Referential of how any financial payment by way of compensation or redress might be referenced in the Draft, if at all;
   h. Capable of alignment with a future revised national Code of Conduct;
   i. Capable of receiving the recognitio or approbatio of the Holy See, whichever is considered required;
   j. Provided a new title and subtitle;
   k. Considered as being issued with what status to achieve national consistency.

iv) Upon consideration, determine the most appropriate clarification of terms such as “redress”, “professional standards”, and “safeguarding” to seek to achieve national consistency.

v) Consider those elements and mechanisms of response and safeguarding formerly captured by Towards Healing and The Melbourne Response not addressed in the Draft and propose how they might be addressed in the future.

vi) Ensure that a 4th version of the Protocol is tested with select and diverse Safeguarding and Professional Standards entities across the country prior to submission.
5. **Meetings**
   The Liaison Group shall meet as often as it deems necessary to fulfill its mandate and responsibilities. The Liaison Group shall ordinarily meet via videoconference.

6. **Support**
   Administrative support may be provided, if required, by the General Secretariat of ACBC and the National Office of CRA.

   Approved expenses shall be met by ACBC and CRA.

7. **Reporting and Collaboration**
   The Liaison Group shall report to the ACBC via its General Secretary and to CRA via its National Executive Director.

   The Chair of the Liaison Group will communicate regularly with the Chair of the IAG and work collaboratively with the Chair of the Reference Group for the Implementation of the New National Safeguarding Office.

   The Liaison Group may at any time request a meeting with the Presidents (and Vice-Presidents) of ACBC and CRA.

8. **Disputation**
   If there be divergence between the Liaison Group and IAG over particular matters in the development of the draft that cannot be resolved in discussions, the matter will be brought jointly by the Chair of the Liaison Group and the Chair of IAG to the Presidents of ACBC and CRA for determination, which will be considered final.

   In the event that the Liaison Group cannot fulfil its mandate given by ACBC and CRA, the Chair of the Liaison Group will notify the Chair of IAG and inform the Presidents of ACBC and CRA. Subsequently, it will be for ACBC and CRA to determine whether to cease the mandate of the Liaison Group or to remove IAG from responsibility for the Protocol.

9. **Term**
   The Liaison Group shall commence its involvement on or after 25 May 2020 and ensure that the 4th version of the Protocol is submitted by IAG to ACBC and CRA by 23 October 2020 for consideration during the November 2020 plenary meeting.

   The involvement of the Liaison Group ceases at the end of the ACBC Plenary Meeting in November 2020 unless requested to continue in a role determined by the ACBC and CRA.

10. **Amendment**
    These Terms of Reference may be amended by agreement of the Presidents of the ACBC and CRA.
Fr Peter Blayney was ordained priest in 1979 for the Archdiocese of Sydney. In 1986 he was incardinated into the newly erected Diocese of Parramatta. He has ministered in several parishes in Sydney and Parramatta. In 1990 he was sent to Rome to study canon law. Since graduating in 1992 he has worked at the Parramatta office of the Interdiocesan Tribunal of NSW & ACT as Auditor, Defender of the Bond, Advocate and Judge. Fr Blayney was Judicial Vicar of the Interdiocesan Tribunal 2012-2017. He is currently Parish Priest of St Patrick’s, Guildford, NSW.

Ms Nicki Patten is the Director, Standards & Legal, at Institute Sisters of Mercy Australia and Papua New Guinea. This role takes in a broad portfolio of governance and legal services, compliance and program development in the areas of safeguarding and responses to survivors of child sexual abuse. After working with Corrs Chambers Westgarth and then Coles Myer for many years, Nicki made the step into the not-for-profit sector, and joined World Vision Australia as Head of Risk and Audit. Roles followed within RMIT University as Executive Officer and later General Counsel and Company Secretary of Baptcare. Nicki has had a long involvement in the governance of not-for-profit organisations including Deputy Chair of the Xavier College Social Justice Network and board member of East Timor Hearts Fund, a charity working with patients in East Timor with heart disease. She is qualified with degrees in Arts and Law from Melbourne University and is a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia.

Fr David Ranson is Vicar General of the Diocese of Broken Bay and Parish Priest of Wahroonga. For many years he served on the Faculty of the Catholic Institute of Sydney as a Senior Lecturer in the Sydney College of Divinity, teaching Christian Spirituality and Pastoral Theology. Throughout the 1990s he enjoyed significant involvement in human formation in Australian seminaries. From this engagement he published a number of articles on the crisis of sexual abuse in the Church and served as a member of an international academic advisory panel for the Royal Commission into Institutional Reponses to Child Sex Abuse.

Dr Tanja Stojadinovic is the Director of Professional Standards for South Australia & the Northern Territory. Tanja has specialised in the area of sexual violence, particularly in working with adults subjected to childhood sexual abuse. She completed a PhD on the impact of ethnic identity on the effects of childhood sexual abuse in 2015. Her experience with adults subjected to childhood sexual abuse ranges from therapeutic clinical work, management, policy, research, consultancy, training and development. Tanja has experience working at all levels of the service sector within both government and non-government organisations. She is passionate about social justice and care for survivors of all forms of sexual violence and trauma.