



# **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE**

## **MANDATE**

OF THE

## **EPISCOPAL PANEL**

FOR

## **CANON LAW**

NOVEMBER 2019

## **Preamble**

The law of the Church “looks towards the achievement of order in the ecclesial society, such that while attributing a primacy to love, grace and the charisms, it facilitates at the same time an orderly development in the life both of the ecclesial society, and of the individual persons who belongs to it.”

The ministry of canon law serves the Church “so that its hierarchical and organic structure may be visible; that its exercise of the functions divinely entrusted to it, particularly of sacred power and of the administration of the sacraments, is properly ordered; that the mutual relationships of Christ’s faithful are reconciled in justice based on charity, with the rights of each safeguarded and defined; and lastly, that the common initiatives which are undertaken so that Christian life may be ever more perfectly carried out, are supported, strengthened and promoted” John Paul II, *Sacrae disciplinae leges*

### **1. Membership and Meetings**

- 1.1. The Panel shall comprise three (3) members as the Conference by-laws determine.
- 1.2. The Panel shall meet as required to deal with issues that may arise at a time and place that the members determine.
- 1.3. The Panel shall meet using communications technology when the agenda or circumstances warrant.

### **2. Areas of Responsibility**

The Panel promotes the life and mission of the Catholic Church in Australia in all of the areas supported by the law of the Church.

### **3. Particular Functions**

In particular, the Panel performs the following functions:

- 3.1. The Panel keeps informed of the activity of the Church and its agencies from the perspective of canon law.
- 3.2. The Panel develops national policies in the specific areas of its responsibilities as approved or requested by the Conference.
- 3.3. The Panel, in accordance with Conference policy, undertakes public and private advocacy in support of the observance of Church law and canonical principles.
- 3.4. The Panel reviews documents of the Conference and its agencies from the perspective of canon law.
- 3.5. The Panel undertakes such specific projects as the Conference may from time to time approve or request.

#### **4. Advisory Role**

The Panel advises the Conference and its members on issues that arise in the areas of its responsibility and, where appropriate, makes recommendations for action that the Conference might undertake at a national level.

#### **5. Advisory Bodies**

The Panel establishes, in accordance with the mandates in Schedule 1, the following advisory bodies to assist it in its responsibilities:

5.1. Canon Law Reference Group

#### **6. Relations**

The Panel maintains relations with:

6.1. The Canon Law Society of Australia and New Zealand

#### **7. Offices**

The Panel does not supervise the work of any office.

#### **8. Secretariat**

The General Secretariat assists the Panel in fulfilling its tasks.

**Schedule 1: Mandates for Advisory Bodies**

Name:	Canon Law Reference Group
Area(s) of Responsibility:	The Group will assist the Episcopal Panel for Canon Law in the promotion of the life and mission of the Catholic Church in Australia in the area of Canon Law.
Number of Members:	The Panel will determine the number of members of the Group as required from time to time.
Appointment of Members:	Following the appointment of members to the Panel at the May plenary meeting of Conference, the Panel will appoint members for the proceeding triennial term and will report these appointments to the Conference at the November plenary meeting. The Panel may re-appoint members for up to two subsequent terms.
Appointment of the Chair:	The Panel Chairman will fill the role of Group Chair as required.
Engagement with Members:	As the need arises, the Panel will engage with the appropriate member(s) of the Reference Group who will be asked to assist with the particular issues being examined.
Administrative Support:	The General Secretariat will provide administrative support to the Group.