

SAFEGUARDING RESTRUCTURING WITHIN RELIGIOUS ORDERS AND DIOCESES

THE JOURNEY SO FAR

November 2010

The Conference of Religious, Conference of Bishops and the National Catholic Safeguarding Commission recognised the need for Dioceses and Religious Congregations to work together as one in the area of Safeguarding.

This decision was consistent with the “One Church” approach promoted by the report of the Cumberlege Commission, “Safeguarding with Confidence.” The two Conferences and the NCSC requested that CSAS take the lead on developing and implementing the work.



January 2011-April 2011

Consultation took place on the proposed model of each Religious Congregation either:-

- Linking with a Safeguarding Commission and Safeguarding Office based in one of the 22 Dioceses.
- Establishing or maintaining their own Commission and Office.
- Joining with another or other Congregations to establish a shared Commission and Office.

This consultation involved Provincials, members of the Religious, Commission Chairs, Safeguarding Co-ordinators and Officers, Religious Safeguarding Co-ordinators and Safeguarding Administrators. Informed by that consultation a structure was proposed and approved by CoR, CBCEW and NCSC.

June 2011 – April 2012

A number of task and finish groups were established to explore what would be needed to bring the agreed structure into being. They were formed by people across the spectrum within the Church, volunteering to bring their knowledge and experience to inform the task.

At the same time a questionnaire was circulated to all Provincials requesting a range of information related to the Safeguarding responsibilities of their Order.

This information has been used to develop a comprehensive database of all Religious Congregations in England and Wales. This database will be vital in supporting the new arrangements.

April 2012 – June 2012

The Conference of Religious AGM and the Conference of Bishops endorsed work undertaken so far. They approved a challenging implementation date of January 2013.

Religious Orders have been asked to indicate their alignment preferences and those have been added to the database.

A third round of briefing/consultation events have been held at Ealing and Salford.



WHAT NEXT

An Implementation Group with representation from the Religious, Dioceses, NCSC and CSAS has been established to oversee the final phase of the work. This includes:-

- Developing a just, equitable and realistic funding formula.
- Completing alignment arrangements including notifying all parties of future links.
- Drafting a “Memorandum of Understanding” which clearly sets out roles, responsibilities, expectations and liabilities. Ultimately this will be signed by each Provincial and the appropriate Bishop.
- Clarifying the new roles of Religious Advisor for Safeguarding and Religious Commission member as well as how those roles will be filled.

It is anticipated that this work will be concluded by September 2012 and further information will be circulated at that time.