

RESTRUCTURING MATTERS

HEADLINE NEWS

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE NOW UNDER WAY

REGIONAL RELIGIOUS COMMISSIONS CEASE TO EXIST

The last ever meeting of a Regional Religious Commission took place on Monday 14th January. From now on the first point of contact with regards to any safeguarding issue - religious or otherwise - should be the local Safeguarding Office either based within the diocese or managed by the individual Order. All Religious Congregations and Orders should make sure that their safeguarding reps know where questions or concerns about safeguarding should be referred to.



Restructuring has created opportunities within the new Commissions for those with knowledge of, and interest in safeguarding for the religious.

The first is for those with experience of the religious life and the expertise to accompany it, to join as members of a new Commission to help ensure that aspects of safeguarding within religious life are recognised within the Commissions.

The second opportunity is for people to act as Safeguarding Adviser for the religious. The role will encompass liaison and contact with a Safeguarding Coordinator to provide advice as required on aspects of religious life, and assistance in determining how national procedures should be applied in regards to specific situations involving the religious.

If you wish to make such a contribution please make yourself known to your local Commission and/or Safeguarding Office via your Local Superior.



The Restructuring Implementation Group will continue to oversee the progress towards "Go-live" on 1st April. If you have any practical concerns relating to implementation, please try first to resolve them within the new Commission structures. If concerns remain, let CSAS know.



DATABASE

The Religious database has now been distributed and is accessible to a limited number of diocesan and CSAS staff. It is located behind a secure interface. A Safeguarding Office can only view records of religious communities that have chosen to align with their Commission.

The database contains basic contact information for Orders within England and Wales. In addition to this information, the system reflects other safeguarding details, such as whether an Order manages any Covenants of Care or has had any allegations made against it since 2001.

Should an Order wish to check what information is held about them or update their contact details they should contact the Safeguarding Office to which they are aligned. If they have chosen to have their own Commission they should contact CSAS in the first instance via admin@csas.uk.net.

TIME TO NETWORK AND MAKE CONTACTS

Most of those who have been involved with safeguarding for the religious will have made valuable contacts with others in this area of work and will have already established effective networks. Rather than let them fall into misuse there is value in extending them. CSAS is keen to encourage these informal links to be made and maintained as a way of helping safeguarding assume a central position within the life of the Church. Please consider how this might be achieved.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: ADVANCE NOTICE

The Memorandum of Understanding, which sets out the basis of the agreement between dioceses and religious for establishing the new Commissions, will shortly be circulated for signing by Bishops and Religious Leaders.