

SOCIAL WELFARE TASK FORCE ANNUAL REPORT 2005

Members:

Sr Helen Anderson sgs
Sr Antoinette Baldwin rsj **CHAIR**
Br Martin Blattman fsc
Br Moy Hitchen cfc
Fr Graham Jackson
Sr Debra McCarthy dc **DEPUTY CHAIR**
Sr Mary-Louise Petro rsm
Ms Juanita Winks
Sr Janet Woods rsm
Sr Sharon Price rsm: Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

The Social Welfare Task Force exists to provide a forum and a network for those who work in congregationally owned or sponsored welfare works. It aims to establish a liaison between those in ministry, CLRI(NSW), CCER and Catholic Welfare Australia (NSW).

In response to requests from those working in congregationally owned or sponsored welfare works the task force was begun by the Executive Committee of CLRI(NSW) during 2002.

Task force members consider current social welfare issues, propose areas to be investigated further by CLRI(NSW), keep the Conference informed about social welfare concerns, receive and reply to reports from CLRI(NSW) representatives on CCER and SWERC (Social Welfare Employment Relations Committee) and prepare submissions to government and church bodies.

MEMBERSHIP

Members are drawn from congregational leadership teams (usually the team member with some responsibility for social welfare works) and from directors and staff of social welfare works owned or sponsored by congregations.

MEETINGS 2005

The meetings for 2005 were scheduled for Tuesday March 1, May 10, July 5 and November 8. In addition, the Social Welfare Task Force organized its first seminar on October 31, 2005.

Issues arising at meetings in 2005 included:

- **Maintaining a Register of Welfare Ministries**
CLRI(NSW) developed and maintains a register of all congregational welfare ministries for its own use and for the use of associated agencies such as CCER and CWA(NSW). All congregations that responded to a survey about agencies are listed. This register is updated each year.
- **CLRI(NSW) and CWA(NSW)**
Our strategy to forge a relationship with CWA's NSW branch in order to have some influence in discussion and decisions being made about welfare ministries in NSW continued during 2005. The newly appointed part-time Executive Officer, Ms Jude Eckerick, was previously employed by a congregationally-owned welfare ministry and is interested in developing the participation of congregational welfare ministries in CWA and CWA(NSW).
- **Integrity in Ministry**
Acting on the recommendation accepted by the Executive Committee in February 2004, that CLRI(NSW) organise an information session on the updated *Integrity in Ministry* document when it became available, the Task Force organised a workshop with Megan Brock rsj on October 31, 2005. This workshop was well-attended and will be repeated by request on March 20, 2006.
- **Child Protection**
A sub-committee was formed to meet on Child Protection issues. The work on this issue was halted until the Head of Agency issue was settled for congregational leaders. Since then, discussions about child protection and congregational members have begun with CCER including "What would you want to say to leaders who have members working with children in an unsupervised way ie not via an agency of some type? What procedures do leaders need to have in place?"
- **Senate Inquiry: Children in Institutional Care**
A watching brief was kept on the material related to this inquiry.
- **Conference for Catholic Social Welfare Employers**
CLRI (NSW) will support the conference for Catholic Social Welfare Employers entitled *Foundations for Effective Employment Relations* to be held at the Vibe Hotel, Sydney on March 30 and 31.
- **SACS Award**
This topic is constantly monitored.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

The committee requests reports from three representatives

- The representative of CLRI(NSW) on the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations until May 2006, Sr Helen Clarke rsc;
- Sr Janet Woods, representative of CLRI(NSW) on the CCER Social Welfare Employment Relations Committee (SWERC). Janet Woods, as a committee member, reports at meetings; and
- The Social Welfare Task Force has a representative, Juanita Winks, on the SWERC SACS Working Party which monitors proposed changes to the SACS Award. Juanita Winks, as a committee member, reports at meetings.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT

The Task Force welcomes additional members. If you have a congregationally owned or sponsored social welfare work and would like to nominate a congregational member or an employee to join the Task Force, please contact the Executive Director.

If you have any issues that you would like to see the Task Force pursue in 2006, please contact a member of the group or the Executive Director.

Sr Antoinette Baldwin rsj
Chair
Social Welfare Task Force
December 1, 2005