



Anglican Diocese of Grafton Registry Update

Edition 3 - February 2015

Dear Rectors, Churchwardens, Parish Councillors and Treasurers,

This third edition of the Registry Update contains information on a variety of topics, please ensure that your Rector (or Priest-in-Charge or Locum), Churchwardens, Parish Councillors and Treasurer receive each Registry Update. (Note: A copy of this Update will also be sent directly to chaplains, business managers of diocesan organisations and members of diocesan councils and committees.)

The information contained in this Registry Update is not confidential or private, so please feel free to share it with others who would benefit from knowing.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Diocesan Year Book

The Year Book is to be both a record and a reference. Assembling the Year Book was more work on this occasion due to the lack of recent Year Books. This meant that the contents of the Year Book needed more scrutiny than usual.

While there was a lot of effort in making the Year Book as accurate as possible, there have been errors. If you find an error, could you please email it to admin@graftondiocese.org.au?

Diocesan Prayer Diary

Similar to the Year Book, the Prayer Diary has taken a fair bit of work to assemble; especially because of some of the format changes. We are also on the hunt for errors to correct so please email any that you find to admin@graftondiocese.org.au

General use of the Prayer Diary is encouraged. They can be photocopied or printed from the Diocesan web site.

Parish Return

Each parish should now have received the Parish Return form that asks for information of the year ending 31 December 2014 and the office bearers elected in the 2015 Parish AGM. The due date for return of this form is 31 March.

You will notice that the Parish Return is a bit slimmer than it has been in recent years. There has been an effort to delete requests for information that is not actively used at the Registry. The information about building conditions has been deferred until the insurance renewal questionnaire later this year. The request for financial information is now reduced to one page of information needed for the Parish Pledge calculation and a requirement to attach a copy of the parish's audited financial statement.

PAYROLL CHANGES

With the approval of Bishop-in-Council, the Diocesan payroll will be moving from a fortnightly payroll to a monthly payroll. The timing of this change is 1 July 2015.

Those who are based in the Bishop's Registry in Grafton will move to a monthly payroll from 1 April 2015 so that the changes can be tested on a smaller group and make the transition smoother.

Why monthly?

As part of the review of Diocesan activities to look for efficiencies and savings, it has been noted that processing of a payroll takes approximately the same amount of working hours regardless of the length of the pay period. Currently, a person spends up to 3 working days processing each payroll.

While we aim to make each payroll more efficient, monthly payroll versus fortnightly payroll is 36 processing days versus 78 processing days per year. This means that once the change to monthly payrolls is implemented, there will be approximately 42 days that can be reallocated to other necessary tasks. This is potentially a big win for the diocese.

We expect that the saving of time and effort will also extend to parishes and schools in that the reduction of payroll days should decrease their paperwork also.

When will people get paid?

The monthly payroll will be set up to pay each person on or before the 15th day of the month regardless whether the 15th is a working day. Payments will be for half the month in arrears (i.e. remuneration for 1st to 15th of that month) and for half the month in advance (i.e. remuneration for the 16th to the end of that month). Each month will be paid identically whether it has 28, 29, 30 or 31 days.

What does it mean for those being paid?

Firstly, there will be no loss of money. What each person gets paid during the year will now be spread over 12 payments instead of 26 payments.

Importantly, each person on the payroll should make sure that the bill payments and bank transfers that are linked to their payroll are adjusted to reflect monthly payments instead of fortnightly. (Personally, I make sure that deductions and transfers are timed for a few days after pay day just in case the bank has a glitch or in case public holidays cause a problem.)

Apart from the frequency of payments, monthly payroll should not cause any other changes.

An exception to this will be casual employees who will be paid in arrears on the basis of the time worked.

Other Process Improvements

As mentioned earlier, it currently takes about 3 days to process each payroll. This is a figure that can be improved and generate more work savings for a more effective Registry. The potential areas of improvement are varied but one of the areas of inefficiency is due to late advice and late changes. Late advice and late changes cause work to be done twice and sometimes creates delays. Coinciding with the start of monthly payroll will be a deadline of the 10th of the month for advice and changes; any advice or changes that are received after the 10th are likely to miss the payroll in that month and will become part of the following month's payroll.

I have also been informed that diocesan payroll has been handling requests for re-timing of annual leave pay and payment of the leave loading. Effective immediately, all annual leave payments and the associated annual leave loading will be paid only in the period that the leave is taken.

STIPEND CONTINUANCE INSURANCE

New insurer

Parish Treasurers would be well aware that in recent years the Group Stipend Continuance Insurance (GSCI) has become increasingly expensive. Alternatives to the current policy were investigated and a new Income Protection Policy has been signed through Willis Insurance as part of the Anglican National Insurance Program.

The new provider is much more affordable (less than 10% of the previous premium) and has an equivalent level of cover.

Premium distribution

This change in Stipend Continuance Insurance was presented to Bishop-in-Council and Bishop-in-Council approved that premium would be picked up in full by the respective parishes, schools and organisations to which the stipended clergy person is appointed.

This decision under clause 130.13 of the Diocesan Governance Ordinance was based on the fact that the insurance premium has been dramatically reduced and the 100% of the new premium is considerably less than the 50% of the previous premium. Claiming the small contributions from each individual clergy was also seen to be a wasteful administrative process.

Clergy over 60 years

Bishop-in-Council noted that at this stage the Ordinance only requires compulsory participation in the Stipend Continuance Insurance up to the age of 60. In recognition that this insurance is also important for those over 60 years, the Bishop-in-Council has requested the preparation of a Bill for the 2015 Synod that changes the maximum compulsory participation age to 70 years.

In the meantime, parishes, schools and other diocesan organisations are encouraged to include their stipended clergy between 60 and 70 years in this insurance cover.

Premium to be deducted on each pay cycle

The practice that was in place for the previous Stipend Continuance Insurance was that the premium was on-charged every 6 months. This practice led to lumpy payments that were typically in arrears and sometimes included clergy who had already left the ministry unit. This was compounded by the Registry's very late billing of most recent premium.

The practice that the Registry is moving to immediately is collecting an amount from ministry units on each pay cycle to cover the equivalent Stipend Continuance Insurance cost for that period. This means that there will be a better association between the payroll and these payroll on-costs. It also means that costs will be more manageable and always relate to people who are currently on the payroll.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

Similar to the changes with regard the collection of the Stipend Continuance Insurance premium, we will now be collecting the premium for Workers Compensation in each pay cycle, effective immediately.

This progressive collection of Workers Compensation premium means that there is a better link between the stipend/wages paid and the Workers Compensation premium charged. Once again, it also means that costs will be more manageable and always relate to people who are currently on the payroll.

PAYROLL – RECORDING OF LEAVE

Several reviews of the administration of the Diocese of Grafton have pointed to the inaccuracy of the recording of leave balances for people on the diocesan payroll. Almost always, the error is that there is more leave showing on our records than what a person is entitled to. This happens because the person being paid takes leave without submitting a leave form or the leave form fails to make its way to the payroll office.

Often this is a sleeper issue until a person terminates and when calculating their final pay questions are raised about their leave balance. Otherwise, it crops up when a person is

perceived to be taking a lot of leave and someone queries their eligibility. If the payroll had reliable records then the heat can be taken out of those situations and entitlements can be processed without difficulty.

The Diocesan Registry needs the co-operation of each ministry unit and person on the payroll with the accurate recording of leave.

Could you please ensure that all instances of annual leave and personal (sick or compassionate) leave are recorded on the leave form, signed, and sent into the payroll office?

In the case of sick leave in excess of two working days, a medical certificate is necessary.

CLERGY LONG SERVICE LEAVE FUND

As advised in the previous Registry Update, General Synod's attempts to update the Clergy Long Service Leave Fund finally come into effect from 1 January 2015. A précis of the new provisions of the Fund were included as an attachment to the previous Registry Update. If you didn't get a copy of that Registry Update, please send an email to admin@graftondiocese.org.au to request a copy.

The new rate of contribution to the Long Service Leave Fund is \$1,460 per annum (\$121.67 per month).

TRAINING

Parish Officers

With the Bishop's Registry going through turbulent times in recent years, there has been less training and awareness sessions run by the Registry for the officers of parishes. The feedback that we have received shows that many people are looking for the training and guidance that those sessions would provide.

There is an opportunity to do some parish officer training sessions in October this year.

As it is our first good opportunity for quite some time, we want to make sure that we use the time and effort to the best effect. The link below directs you to a short survey that will help to guide the design of a training/awareness session that best meets the greatest need.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GraftonDioceseParishTraining>

Please take a couple of minutes to go on line and complete the short survey.

Any member of our Diocese is welcome to complete the survey but it is requested that each person only does the survey once.

Safe Church Training

A number of parishes are on the ball and have been asking about Safe Church training sessions to make sure that their key people are appropriately trained in Safe Church practices.

We have made enquiries with another organisation to deliver Safe Church training on our behalf and we are now waiting for their reply. The Safe Church training will be courses accredited by Safe Church Training Australia and involve full courses and refresher courses. We hope to have 4 of each course spread across the diocese to make attendance as easy as possible.

Faithfulness in Service

Faithfulness in Service training sessions are also being planned and we hope to announce details before Easter.

TRUST ACCOUNTS WITH CORPORATE TRUSTEES

In preparation for their audits and annual meetings, parish treasurers have been in contact with the Bishop's Registry to find out trust balances and the distribution applied to each trust.

The Corporate Trustees made a decision to delay the declaration of trust distributions to each trust for 2014 until the auditor was able to confirm the accuracy of the accounts.

This is a prudent decision by the Corporate Trustees because, despite all of the improvements that have been made in the Diocesan accounts, more verification is required at this stage to avoid the risk of making an incorrect distribution of fund earnings.

Once the 2014 fund distribution is completed, each parish that benefits from a trust will receive a report detailing the trust balance and movement of funds during 2014.

BANKING WITH AFGD

We wish to remind parishes and other diocesan organisations of two resolutions passed in 2013 when the diocese was receiving the assistance of the Independent Oversight Committee.

Church Trust Property Vested in Diocesan Organisations

The IOC resolves that from this day forward the Bishop-in-Council will not approve the application of church trust property to a first call mortgage by an external financial provider unless the Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese is unable or unwilling to provide the finance. This mandatory resolution may only be rescinded by a resolution of Synod by a ¾ majority.

Diocesan Organisation Banking Arrangements

By the end of 2014 all Diocesan organisations will be required to conduct transactional banking with Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese unless authorised to bank with an external financial provider by the Bishop-in-Council. This mandatory resolution may only be rescinded by a resolution of Synod by a ¾ majority.

All organisations of the diocese are encouraged to review their banking practices without delay. Those that are not currently banking with AFGD should get in touch with AFGD and discuss the best way to move their banking arrangements.

If after working with the AFGD staff, no practical banking solution can be found, organisations can then write to the Bishop-in-Council to request an exemption from the mandatory resolution.

WIRELESS MICROPHONES

In the November 2014 Registry Update, information was provided on the changes to radio frequencies from 1 January 2015 and its impact on wireless microphone technology. If your parish is yet to review its situation, then please make it a priority as there are significant fines that can be imposed on individuals and organisations

REGISTRY STAFFING

It is with regret that I advise that Mrs Sue McLachlan, Compliance Officer, has submitted her resignation. Sue has been on extended personal leave and has decided that leaving her employment at the Diocese would be best for her well-being. This is a sad loss because of Sue's long service at the Registry in a number of roles. We wish her well. For the time-being, Sue's responsibilities have been shared among the Registry staff and a temporary staff member until a more permanent arrangement can be implemented.

The staffing of the Registry is currently:

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|---|---|---|
| Chris Nelson registrar@graftondiocese.org.au | Registrar/General Manager | Please direct any general policy or Ordinance queries and requests for Bishop-in- Council, Corporate Trustees and Property Board to Chris |
| Julie White financemanager@graftondiocese.org.au | Diocesan Accountant | Please direct any accounting policy queries and requests for accounting reports to Julie |
| Gavin McPherson gavmcpherson@graftondiocese.org.au | Assistant Accountant (Temporary and Part-time) | Gavin will be assisting Julie in accounting processes, acting as a back-up for payroll, and implementing a number of accounting process improvements |
| Jenny Brock payroll@graftondiocese.org.au debtors@graftondiocese.org.au | Payroll and Debtors Clerk | Please direct any payroll and debtors queries to Jenny |

Claims for general insurance, workers compensation or income protection insurance (GSCI) can be directed to one of the finance team – Julie, Gavin or Jenny

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| Maree Collett maree.collett@graftondiocese.org.au | PA to the Bishop and MDO | Please direct any queries about the availability of the Bishop or MDO, faculties, licensing, SRE, Working With Children Checks and Safe Ministry checks to Maree |
| Kaytrina Jessup kaytrina.jessup@graftondiocese.org.au | PA to Registrar | Please direct any queries about the Registrar's availability, the Diocesan website and Facebook page, Parish Annual Returns, Year Book, Synod, and Clergy Removal to Kaytrina |

Also in the Registry are the Anglican Funds Grafton Diocese team of Blaine Fitzgerald, Annette Dent and Sarah Rediger.

The above arrangements are temporary and under review.

IMPORTANT DATES

Final date for Parish AGM: 28th February

Due date for Parish Returns: 31st March

Pre-Synod Meetings

10am Saturday 23rd May 2015, Kempsey
6.30pm Monday 25th May 2015, Woolgoolga
6.30pm Friday 29th May 2015, Casino (To be confirmed)
10am Saturday 30th May 2015, Byron Bay

Synod will be held from Friday 12 to Sunday 14 June 2015 with the Friday evening opening service at St Thomas' Church, Port Macquarie and the Saturday and Sunday business sessions at St Columba Anglican School, Port Macquarie

Bishop-in-Council

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|---|---|
| 26 th February 2015 (amended date) | 13 th August 2015 |
| 26 th March 2015 | 1 st October 2015 (amended date) |
| 7 th May 2015 | 12 th November 2015 (amended date) |
| 2 nd July 2015 | |

Corporate Trustees

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 22 nd January 2015 | 23 rd July 2015 |
| 5 th March 2015 | 3 rd September 2015 |
| 16 th April 2015 | 15 th October 2015 |
| 28 th May 2015 | 26 th November 2015 |

Property Board

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 20 th February 2015 | 10 th July 2015 |
| 13 th March 2015 | 21 st August 2015 |
| 17 th April 2015 | 18 th September 2015 |
| 15 th May 2015 | 16 th October 2015 |
| 5 th June 2015 | 20 th November 2015 |

If you have any submission to a meeting of Bishop-in-Council, the Corporate Trustees or the Property Board, please provide these to the Registrar at least 10 days prior to a meeting to ensure that your submission can be included in the business of that meeting.

Yours in Christ's service,

Chris Nelson
Registrar/General Manager
Anglican Diocese of Grafton