

STATEMENT ON THE DEATH OF BISHOP BILL WRIGHT

The Board and staff of Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) have expressed their sorrow at the recent death of Bishop William (Bill) Wright former Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

Chair of ACSL, Professor The Hon. Michael Lavarch AO paid tribute to Bishop Bill at the November Board Meeting of ACSL, describing him as a man of great compassion. He highlighted the significant role Bishop Bill had played in confronting the failures of the Catholic Church in Australia to address historical child sexual abuse.

“Bishop Bill Wright was a man of great integrity. He displayed this in his many roles related to safeguarding children and adults at risk, and when confronted with the legacy of abuse in his Diocese of Newcastle-Maitland, he committed himself and the Diocese to supporting survivors. This included establishing the Diocese’s Zimmerman Services for pastoral healing and support, which is funded through the Bishop’s Healing Fund.

Bill was a member of the Truth, Justice and Healing Council and Chaired the Bishops Commission for Professional Standards and Safeguarding, which oversees the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. Bill took it upon himself to ensure that the Church introduced reforms to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and championed the implementation of the Standards across the Church.

We are all indebted to Bill for his leadership, and we will miss his wisdom and passion. We extend our prayers and good wishes to Bishop Bill’s family, friends, and parishioners.

It is our responsibility at ACSL to ensure that his vision for a safe Church for everyone endures.”