

## - MEDIA RELEASE -

### **Change of leadership for ACSL at Annual General Meeting as new Board Chair Mr David Penny welcomed to the role**

**18 April 2024**

Outgoing Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) Board Chair Professor the Honourable Michael Lavarch AO has been thanked for his service at ACSL's recent Annual General Meeting (17 April 2024), as incoming Board Chair Mr David Penny is welcomed into the role.

Mr Penny, who has served as an ACSL Board Director since the company's creation in 2020, is currently Executive Leader Operations at The Institute of Sisters of Mercy Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPNG).

Mr Penny has also served in a variety of Church leadership roles within dioceses and Ministerial Public Juridic Persons (MPJPs).

ACSL CEO Dr Ursula Stephens said that Mr Penny's significant experience across the Church and knowledge of ACSL's operating environment makes him well placed to lead ACSL into its next chapter.

'ACSL's staff and Board can feel assured with David steering the ship as we continue to provide essential safeguarding services for the Church.'

'I would also like to express our deep thanks to our departing Chair Professor the Honourable Michael Lavarch AO, who has made an outstanding contribution to the status of safeguarding within the Church.'

'Michael ably led efforts to secure an expanded set of safeguarding standards for the Church, including protections for adults at risk as well as children. He was also instrumental in updating our risk-based audit framework and the establishment of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Auditor Register, providing choice in auditor to Catholic entities. Last but not least he worked collaboratively with our Member Representatives to develop ACSL's new Subscriber Model, providing ACSL with funding to continue our important work', Dr Stephens said.

On behalf of ACSL's Member Representatives, Fr Tom McDonough CP thanked Michael for his gracious and unswerving advocacy for those who have suffered abuse, and his commitment to ensuring that ACSL continues to support a national and consistent approach within the Church to safeguarding children and all vulnerable people.

A new ACSL Board Member was also welcomed at the 17 April Annual General Meeting (AGM). Mr Michael Moore comes to the ACSL Board with 43 years experience in management, accountancy and board roles in Australia and the United Kingdom. Since 1997, Michael has worked for the Catholic Church in Australia in senior management and board roles.

ACSL's 2022-2023 Annual Report was also presented and accepted at the AGM. This report covers a longer period than usual, reflecting the change to ACSL's company reporting period from a financial to calendar year that was agreed in 2023.

The report offers a snapshot of ACSL's activities and progress in key service areas such as learning and development, audit and review, professional standards support, complaints response and systems management.

Information about ACSL's Governance, including board members can be found [here](#).

ACSL's 2022-2023 Annual Report can be viewed [here](#).