



Summary of  
**NATIONAL COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS**  
FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT  
NOVEMBER 2025

**SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS – NOVEMBER 2025**

National Council met in Canberra on 8-9 November 2025. Below is a summary of key matters discussed at that Meeting.

**AMENDMENTS TO *The Rule***

The proposed amendments to *The Rule* Part III were forwarded to the Confederation General International in late October and National Council expects to be advised of the outcome before the end of 2025. National Council is now working through revisions to the Procedures before moving to the Appendices.

National Council will hold information sessions for Society Leaders so that they understand, and can pass through to Members, the changes to the revised Part III. Thought is also being given to exploring a ‘**Frequently asked questions**’ document and, in the 2nd quarter of 2026, offering a series of Town Hall discussion sessions for interested Members.

**UPDATES ON SAFEGUARDING**

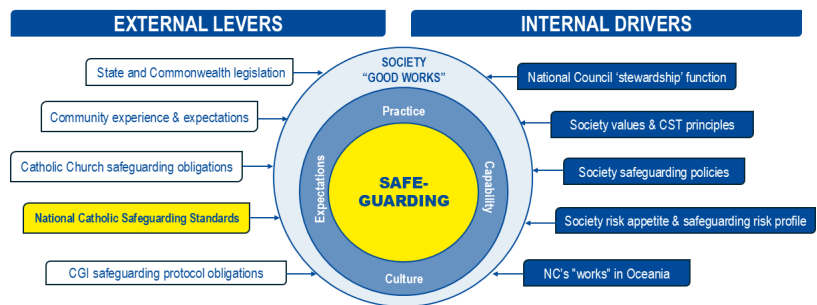
The Society’s **Safeguarding Standards Office (SSO)** reported on the continuing progress of the Society with implementing the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) using the online NCSS self-assessment portal. Queensland confirmed that it is working to align itself with new State standards, introduced under recent safeguarding legislation. The National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, can be viewed [here](#).

National Council, which acts as the ‘Church Authority’ on safeguarding matters is confident the Society’s safeguarding **leadership training** is progressing well - over 85% of participants having completed the five-module leadership program which was developed in consultation with Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL). Protocols are in place to ensure new State/Territory Council Members and Directors of Society bodies corporate are registered and complete this training. The SSO is exploring reducing this training to three learning modules.

An **external audit** of the National Council is to be undertaken by ACSL in the first quarter of 2026 as part of the safeguarding audit paradigm endorsed by National Council in 2024. National Council will look to this audit to prepare a framework for the Society’s own internal safeguarding audit program. In preparation for the Society-wide approach to audit, a briefing session was convened for Society CEOs to start determining which services, programs and activities would be audited against which standards (especially given the complex array of services offered across all jurisdictions).

National Council has requested the SSO consult with Society CEOs to develop an agreed approach to the collation and internal reporting of de-identified safeguarding complaints data. This data can be very helpful in aiding the Society’s understanding of areas of highest safeguarding risk and strategic investment needs.

**SOCIETY SAFEGUARDING ECOSYSTEM**



## OUR WORK TOGETHER

Following drafting undertaken by a working group consisting of members from National Council and Council CEOs, a **Collaboration and Consultation Framework** was approved by National Council. This Framework was designed to assist explore those matters of importance to National Council that may have an impact on State and Territory Councils. State and Territory Presidents agreed the Framework may provide helpful protocols when Councils undertake consultation within their own jurisdiction.

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

A national gathering of Spirit of Youth pilgrims from Society State and Territory Councils will participate in the **Australian Catholic Youth Festival** being convened in Melbourne at the end of November. This is the strongest Society participation in the Festival since its inception.

National Council notes that **World Youth Day 2027** will take place in Seoul, South Korea, in August 2027 and working in conjunction with State and Territory Councils, is proposing a national approach to support the participation of our young people at this event. Individual Councils might consider fund-raising activities at the Conference level to assist meeting the cost of sending young Vincentians from each jurisdiction. National Council was supportive of Councils also exploring financial support for a small number of pilgrims from our Oceania Region.

### *The Vincentian Way*

National Council continues to explore ways to introduce and implement the principles of *The Vincentian Way* into broader Society operations. While there had previously been discussion regarding documentation to support the implementation of *The Vincentian Way*, it was noted the language and Vincentian spirituality captured as part of the framework is already being expressed in different opportunities around the country, which will complement the rollout of *The Vincentian Way*.

## CONGRESS 2023+ IMPLEMENTATION – UPDATE ON REVITALISATION INITIATIVES

National Council received an update on seven more of the 15 Congress Project Teams that now have completed their work bringing the total of completed works to 9. Three Congress Projects continue to be actively implemented by State and Territory Councils with facilitation from the National Council's Secretariate.

1. A **national recruitment campaign** brief, will see Secretariate working with Council CEOs to explore an agreed implementation approach through a National Recruitment Campaign Working Group is being established.
2. **Leadership Training** that considers the skills required for higher leadership in the Society is also being explored. This will take the form of a custom leadership training programme, in collaboration with interested States and Territories. While this will not replace existing individual state training initiatives, it will offer a consistent approach in the Vincentian formation of Society leaders and senior employee across the Society.
3. The development of a **national intranet site** which will hold national content and be accessible to all Society Members has been a long-standing priority for Members. National Council has agreed to develop this tool.

Remaining Congress initiatives include New Conference Models, Innovation and Working towards Congress 2028. These sit with State and Territory Councils to pursue in the first instance.

## OUR ADVOCACY

As part of the Society's **Public Policy Advocacy**, and its long-term plan to work with stakeholders who are promoting reform of the tax and/or the tax transfer system, National Council Members attended a presentation by Australia National University Associate Professor Ben Phillips at Parliament House on 6 November, hosted by Louise Miller-Frost (a past CEO of SVdP South Australia). This was followed up by visits to some Parliamentarians by State Council Presidents over the course of the day. It is hoped that ongoing activities like this will enable the Society and others to align a strongly focused voice on tax reform before the next federal election. The Secretariate will work with members of National Council to explore meeting Federal politicians in their electorates over the coming year.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Australian Conferences provide financial support to a large number of overseas Conferences through National Council's **Overseas Partnerships Program**. National Council is working with the India National Council to address the increasingly difficult environment, including governmental regulations which are being applied on a region-by-region basis. These challenges are leading to ongoing delays in distribution of donor funds to the 1,000+ Conferences in India. National Council determined to explore joining the **Australian Council for International Development** which will allow the Society to take advantage of best practices in international development, gain access to industry information and statistics, and have the ability to apply for Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade accreditation (and possibly funding) in the longer term.