



Additional questions – Archbishop Glenn Davies, Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney

1. Do you agree with recommendation No. 1 of the Report of the Expert Panel of the Religious Freedom Review (also known as the Ruddock Report)?

We agree with the Federal Government's response to Recommendation No. 1, which recognises that the removal of exemptions and exceptions for religious bodies needs to be undertaken holistically, to strike the appropriate balance between the right of an individual not to be discriminated against on the basis of a protected attribute, and the right of a religious institution to have the freedom to operate in accordance with their religious ethos. We believe that the current system of exemptions and exceptions for religious bodies is flawed. If there is an appropriate mechanism for balancing these two rights, we support recommendation 1.

We note that the proposed new Part 2B has an appropriate balancing mechanism for balancing the right of an individual not be discriminated on the basis of religious belief with the right of a religious institution to operate in accordance with their religious ethos. However, this mechanism only operated with respect to religious beliefs. It would not be appropriate to remove the exemptions for religious bodies in Section 56 until there is a similar balancing mechanism with respect to the other aspects of discrimination covered by the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*.

We recognise that this is a complex issue. We note that the Federal Government has referred Ruddock Recommendations 1, 6 and 8 to the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC). As noted in our submission, we believe it is appropriate to wait until the ALRC has completed this work before these recommendations are implemented in NSW.

2. Do you agree with recommendation No. 13 of the Report of the Expert Panel of the Religious Freedom Review (also known as the Ruddock Report)?

We agree with recommendation no. 13, which calls for the abolition of statutory or common law offences of blasphemy.