

Cumberlege Response from: Congregation of the Daughters of the Cross of Liege
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The Daughters of the Cross have a presence in six of the RC Diocese in England. Our interaction relating to COPCA within the various diocese is variable. We tend to receive our information through COPCA / COR.

1. We feel the Church is a safer place to be than Pre-Nolan. Our communities are more aware and better informed. This is also true of the wider Church Communities we are involved in.

More joined up thinking is required. As religious community employing involving over 1000 staff and volunteers, we have our own Registered Bodies. The whole COR/COPCA process was so slow in being able to cope with the volume of CRB's we would have had serious trouble with CSCI and LA requirements if we had not established our own routes for obtaining CRB checks. We would not have been able to keep our establishments staffed and supported. Over half of our communities and employees are on sites where there are vulnerable children and adults.

Our Members, employees and volunteers are all CRB Checked, the turn around is now much quicker. However there is no link of our information into the COR /COPCA database. Likewise this is true of other information held.

Our voluntary Aided establishments are checked under their Education Authority, creating another weakness for a One Church – One Response approach.

We would not welcome a further additional expense and loss of staff hours needed to recheck everyone to facilitate merging our records with the main group, although we agree that merging records like our would give a more complete picture.

2. One concern, is that the Priest (or Religious) now appear to be guilty until proved innocent, rather than innocent until proved guilty. We are not talking about unquestionable evidence. (This can be said of some other professions)

as well) The whole process is so time consuming, the mud sticks, this is especially sad if the person is innocent, as opposed to those whose case may be dropped purely on technicality.

Very Historical Cases can present particular difficulties. COPCA due to the enormity of its task, is only equipping itself to deal with such cases.

For us there was the experience of too us major confusion between how a Diocesan Services appointed staff - member - who had no understanding of the limits of their role which was outside of the COPCA network. As a result we were misled and investigating and reporting channels were totally confused.

3. We think that COPCA have to be commended for:

- The amount of work covered in producing comprehensive guidelines, policies and procedures.
- For trying to fit in the needs of Religious Orders into what was clearly designed for diocesan needs and remains so.
- For widening their remit to cover vulnerable adults.

However we are left asking, "Can one solution really fit all situations in such a complex organisation as the Church?"

The training sessions run by COPCA / COR which I attended were excellent. I have no knowledge of future training plans.

4. As a Religious Congregation we have indicated which commission for Religious Congregations we wish to be part of and we hope when these are up and running we will feel more supported.

Sister Veronica Hagen
Sister Annette Clemence

On behalf of the Daughters of the Cross of Liege