

# Status of Recommendations from 2007

## I. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The structures and programs required by the *Charter* have been established, as the audits confirm. We must now move to assessing the effectiveness of those structures and programs while streamlining the audit process.

**Recommendation:** Audit documents should be reexamined with a view toward assessing the *Charter* structures and programs as well as combining some of the concepts of the audit process. This could result in a simplification of the process for both those audited and the auditors.

**Status:** The audit documents were reexamined, and changes were made. The Instruments were changed to provide more specificity about what the auditors will be asking, to avoid any surprises for either the auditors or the diocese being audited. Auditors and diocesan personnel are trained using the same manual.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

Research suggests that one in five priests serving in the United States is an international priest. In 2003 the USCCB Committee on Migration issued *Guidelines for Receiving Pastoral Ministers in the United States*, a document that was developed in response to this reality and that outlines components of an orientation program for international priests. Providing sufficient orientation for these priests is a challenge for dioceses and eparchies. Offering safe environment training, conducting background evaluations and educating international priests to legal standards regarding sexual contact with minors are necessary components of any orientation program.

Additionally, during the 2007 audit period, 6 of the 12 credible allegations about persons who were still minors were made against international priests.

**Recommendation:** That dioceses/eparchies take all actions possible to conduct background evaluations of international priests, provide safe environment training in appropriate languages and review with these priests the legal standards that define sexual abuse of a minor in the local civic jurisdiction.

**Status:** Those dioceses audited on-site as well as those that submitted data all indicated that they conduct background evaluations on international priests. A variety of methods are employed, from using Interpol resources to requiring a letter of suitability from the bishop of the diocese/eparchy. Thoroughness of these evaluations is still very difficult to achieve. Some dioceses/eparchies only accept priests when the receiving bishop has a personal relationship with the sending bishop. All dioceses/eparchies either provide training for international priests or require the international priests to be sufficiently fluent in English. Challenges remain, however, in obtaining a thorough background evaluation as well as addressing cultural differences in safe environment training. These issues will continue to be studied and addressed.

## 3. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

The 2007 audit data show abuse rising and peaking between 1960 and 1980. These are the same patterns shown by the *Nature and Scope* Study in 2004 and by every prior annual study by CARA. This makes even

more imperative the completion of the *Causes and Context* study, which is not yet fully funded.

**Recommendation:** The total budget for the *Causes and Context* study is \$2.6 million, less than one-half of 1% of the amount spent by the American dioceses on the abuse crisis in 2007. The Conference, individual dioceses, and any Catholics interested in the *Charter* should consider a contribution to close the funding gap, which is now slightly less than \$1 million.

**Status:** Fund-raising efforts continued with some success. Gifts were received from Catholic Mutual, the Twin Cities Voice of the Faithful, and a foundation associated with an original member of the Board. No gifts have been received from individual dioceses. Several Catholic organizations are still in the decision-making process. Efforts to reach out to more Catholic organizations will continue. If the balance of funding is not raised in the next six months, the study's scope will have to be curtailed.