STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN PROVINCE OF THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS RE:

THE REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE UNDERTAKEN BY THE NBSCCCI ('National Board')

The Christian Brothers welcome the conclusion of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI), that the Province has developed '*a robust safeguarding ethos and culture at its remaining operations in Ireland*' and that *'it has become a safe organisation for children and young adults'*.

The purpose of the review was to assess if current safeguarding practice by the Christian Brothers complies with the standards set out by the Catholic church in Ireland - '*Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance'* - and that allegations and concerns are being appropriately dealt with.

The Christian Brothers accept that a safeguarding deficit existed in the past and they deeply regret the hurt that this causes.

> "*We want to learn from the mistakes of the past and to create a safe environment for all children and young adults. By developing robust child protection measures and inviting the National Board to independently assess these, we aim to continuously enhance child protection safeguards so that the mistakes of the past may never be repeated.*
>
> *"The Congregation accepts in full the National Board's recommendations on how to further enhance safeguarding measures for the future. Half of the Board's recommendations have already been implemented or are nearing completion and work on the remaining elements is underway,"* Province Leadership Team.

Ends. Date: Tuesday 10th December 2013

Additional Information:

The NBSCCCI Review includes data on allegations in respect of a seventy three year period from 1940. It shows that the average allegation reported to the Christian Brothers refers to incidents from approximately 47 years ago. 1 allegation relates to the 12 year period since 2001; 8 allegations relate to the period from 1991 to 2000; the greatest concentration (c. 70%) of alleged incidences of abuse relate to a 20 year period from 1956 to 1975, the darkest period in the Congregation's history. All allegations of abuse against Brothers have been (and are as a matter of course) disclosed to the civil authorities North and South.

The following tables set out:

- The Congregation's compliance with the Church's Safeguarding Standards, and
- An outline of the NBSCCCI's recommendations to further enhance safeguarding practices for the future

I. DELIVERY AGAINST CHURCH SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS		
Standard	**Criterion**	**Met fully, met partially or not met**
1	***A written policy on keeping children safe***	9 criteria: All met fully
2	***Management of allegations***	7 criteria: 6 fully met and 1* partially met. **Existing complaints procedures relate solely to abuse matters. The NBSCCCI has recommended an enhanced child focused complaints procedure that also extends to dealing with complaints about unacceptable behaviour towards children. This criterion will be implemented in full.*
3	***Preventing Harm to Children***, including: • safe recruitment and vetting • Codes of behavior • Operating safe activities for children	12 criteria: 11 met fully. 1 not met*. **The remaining criterion required a dedicated code of behavior when working with children with additional needs or disabilities. As the Christian Brothers have not been providing any services in this regard, no code was in place. This will be addressed immediately.*
4	***Training and Education***	4 criteria: All met fully
5	***Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message***	6 criteria: 5 met full. 1 partially met*. **The remaining criterion was partially met and will be implemented in full i.e. that children and young people should be involved in the design of child friendly posters and leaflets.*
6	***Access to Advice and Support***	6 criteria: 5 met fully. 1 partially met*. **The remaining criterion was partially met and will be implemented in full i.e. that the process of relaying information on support services and how to access support should be automatically available.*
7	***Implementing and Monitoring Standards***	4 criteria: 2 met fully. 2 were partially* met. **Despite recognition of delivery in the final 2 areas, these can only be considered as partially met as these were not formalized at the time of the Review. A formal plan comprising all safeguarding elements is required together with a more formalised review process.*

II. Summary of NBSCCCI Recommendations and Province Response	
Recommendation	**Province Response**
1. Develop a child focussed complaints procedure (with inputs from children and young adults) to deal with complaints of unacceptable behaviour other than child abuse	Underway
2. Province to amend filing structure to NBSCCI template	Completed
3. Formalise recording and investigative procedures where a decision is taken to step a Brother aside from ministry	Underway
4. Consider counselling and pastoral support on receipt of a claim from a claimant's solicitor	Under active review re: how best to implement
5. Consider having a range of incremental support services available to survivors	Under active review re: how best to implement
6. Consider enhanced measures to support children with additional needs, including children with disabilities	Under active review re: how best to implement
7. Provide regular safeguarding 'Training to Trainers' of all Christian Brothers	Completed
8. Conduct a training needs analysis	Completed
9. Engage children and young people in the development of child friendly leaflets and posters advising of the order's safeguarding policies and how to report a concern	Underway
10. Develop and publish a victim support strategy	Underway
11. Develop a directory of professional specialists providing assessment and therapeutic services for individuals who have engaged in sexually harmful behaviour	Underway
12. Develop a three-year strategic safeguarding plan	Substantially completed