

Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Small Business Insurance

I write on behalf of Marsden Park Catholic Parish, a not-for-profit faith community that operates solely through the generosity of parishioners. The parish does not exist for profit and has no independent income streams beyond weekly donations and occasional fundraising activities.

One of the most significant and growing challenges we face is the affordability and accessibility of insurance. Premiums for essential coverage—including public liability, property, professional indemnity, and event-related insurance—have increased substantially over recent years. These rising costs place considerable strain on our limited financial resources and directly reduce our capacity to provide pastoral care, community programs, youth initiatives, and outreach to vulnerable members of the community.

Our parish community is largely comprised of young families who are already navigating mortgages and broader cost-of-living pressures. This reality significantly limits our ability to increase fundraising efforts without placing additional burden on parishioners. Unlike commercial enterprises, we are unable to pass on increased insurance costs through fees or pricing structures.

Access to insurance that is affordable, appropriate, and reflective of the low-risk, volunteer-driven, and community-focused nature of parish activities is essential to our ongoing operation. Current insurance products and pricing models do not adequately recognise the unique circumstances of not-for-profit, faith-based organisations.

I respectfully encourage the Inquiry to consider targeted measures for not-for-profit and faith-based organisations, including the development of tailored insurance products, clearer regulatory support, and mechanisms that promote affordability and long-term sustainability. Without meaningful reform, many community organisations will be forced to reduce essential services or discontinue activities that play a vital role in social cohesion and community wellbeing.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Fr Gayan Thamel
Parish Priest
Marsden Park Catholic Parish