
UnitingCare WA Forum

Chairperson	Robert Watson (elected annually by Synod)
Members	(appointed by Agencies)
Good Samaritan Industries	
Chairperson	Rod Benness
CEO	John Knowles
Uniting Church Homes	
Chairperson	Fred Boshart
CEO	Vaughan Harding
UnitingCare West	
Chairperson	Peter Fitzpatrick (from December)
CEO	Sue Ash

UnitingCare Australia is the national body for the UnitingCare Network, one of the largest providers of community services in Australia. With over 1,600 sites, the network employs 39,000 staff and is supported by the work of over 28,000 volunteers. We provide services to children, young people and families, Indigenous Australians, people with disabilities, the poor and disadvantaged, people from culturally diverse backgrounds and older Australians in urban, rural and remote communities.

UnitingCare Australia's Mission is to express God's love for all people through the Uniting Church's commitment to supporting individuals, families and communities through advocacy and the enhancement of community service provision.

In WA this mission is expressed through our agencies: Good Samaritan Industries, Juniper, and UnitingCare West. (For more comprehensive details please see their individual Synod Reports.)

1. NATIONAL UNITINGCARE COMMITTEE

The Chairperson of the Forum sits on the National UnitingCare Committee and attends the meeting of the Synod Directors, which is held in conjunction with the National Meeting.

Each synod is represented by its UnitingCare Director (or equivalent) and a number of Assembly elected members. Currently WA has only one formal seat on the National Committee. Sue Ash is no longer an Assembly appointment and her role at present is reliant on her chairing the Social Policy Network. I believe this is unfortunate.

The National body is currently undergoing a significant restructure so that it can meet the changing political landscape and the needs of our Uniting Church agencies. There are exponential changes occurring in the social service and health portfolios – from service philosophy through to funding mechanisms. All will have a big impact on the entire UnitingCare network.

2. POSITION OF NATIONAL DIRECTOR

After fourteen years with UnitingCare, National Director Lin Hatfield Dodds resigned and finished on 9 June 2016. Lin was appointed to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet as the Deputy Secretary, Social Policy.

May I acknowledge Lin's outstanding contribution to UnitingCare Australia and to social services generally throughout Australia.

Associate National Director, Martin J Cowling, is acting as National Director during the transition period from 10 June until the position is filled.



3. BRAND

The Forum continues to have oversight of Brand in WA through its given mandate.

A national branding conversation has been occurring for some two years at a national level. Currently, Uniting NSW/ACT is well established and the trademark is in the process of being transferred back to the Assembly.

Until the trademark process is completed, Uniting NSW/ACT will have governance oversight responsibilities. Others may establish bilateral agreements subject to the establishment of appropriate governance processes and structures.

4. LEADER'S FORUM

The National Committee sponsored a Leaders' Forum for CEOs and Board Members of our Agencies. An invitation was also issued to moderators and general secretaries. The forum was held on September 15-16 2016 in Canberra.

Chairs of Boards and CEOs of our three agencies attended. The Forum also sponsored the Chair of Congregation Community Services Commission to attend.

5. UNITINGCARE/TARGET CHRISTMAS APPEAL

UnitingCare Australia undertook a review of the UnitingCare Target Christmas Appeal. In WA UnitingCare West acts as the appeal sponsor on behalf of the Synod.

Despite identifying challenges, it was generally agreed that the Appeal has great potential as a

powerful relationship between a significant national not-for-profit network and an Australian retailer. Both Target and UnitingCare Australia supported a three-year commitment to develop the relationship as strongly as possible.

6. UNITINGCARE (WA) AGENCIES

Our three UnitingCare Agencies in WA report directly to Synod and, as mentioned earlier, I commend their reports to your reading.

This year they will make a contribution to UnitingCare Australia and the Uniting Church in WA totalling \$181,000.

7. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND WELCOMES

7.1 REV JOHN DUNN

The members of the Forum wish to formally acknowledge and thank Rev John Dunn for his work over eight years as the Executive Officer of the Forum. John came into the role in 2007 and saw the successful transition of the Uniting Care Board into the now Forum. He has worked tirelessly locally and at a national level to provide a strong, united, effective, compassionate and creative network to influence for better quality-of-life outcomes for those most disadvantaged, and deliver social services that make a positive difference.

7.2 ROD BENNESS

The Forum would wholeheartedly support the proposed thanks and acknowledgment for Rod Benness. We truly recognize his contribution both to GSI but also the Forum and its meetings.

7.3 DAVID HOLDEN AND GLENDA CAMPBELL EVANS

Thanks also go to David Holden for his chairing of the UnitingCare West Board during some difficult times and his commitment to good governance and not straying from the mandate given. Appreciation also to Glenda Campbell Evans who held the Chair role for six months while a new Chair was being selected.



7.4 PETER FITZPATRICK

Welcome to Peter as the new Chair of UnitingCare West and we look forward to your contribution to the Forum.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion the Forum acknowledges the significant work and commitment of our agency Boards, staff and many volunteers. We also acknowledge the many congregations throughout

WA who provide facilities, financial and prayerful support for the work of our agencies. In all of this, together, we give expression to God's inclusive love.

Robert Watson
Executive Chairperson
Mobile: 0447 044 677

