

PROPOSAL 2
(Frequency of Synod Meetings)
The Synod Standing Committee proposes:

That the Synod:

- a) decrease the frequency of Synod meetings from annually to twice within each triennium between Assembly meetings at approximately 18 month intervals, such that in 2018 (an Assembly year) there is no meeting, in 2019 a meeting is held in the first half of the year, and in 2020 a meeting is held in the second half of the year;
- b) request the General Secretary to arrange for a review of the By-Laws of the Synod in relation to a changed frequency of meetings.

Rationale

1. The current operating cost of running the Synod meeting is \$30,000 per annum, most of which is covered by the registration fees of the members. Ultimately this would then be a saving to members and those congregations who pay on behalf of their members. We have relatively few claims for travel or accommodation reimbursement, so this would also be a saving for members who meet these costs personally.
2. Having a Synod every 18 months will take pressure off the arrangements committee and staff, as well as those who need to write/present reports. Preparation for a Synod meeting involves around 500 working hours at an estimated cost of nearly \$20,000.
3. Regulation 3.7.4.1 (iii) provides that members elected to serve on the Synod Standing Committee serve until the next ordinary meeting of Synod. An extended period between Synod meetings would allow for better Standing Committee development.
4. Annual decisions like the budget are already delegated to the Standing Committee
5. A review of the frequency of Synod meetings in other Synods reveals that apart from the Synod of Western Australia and Northern Synod, the Synods of Queensland, New South Wales/ACT, Victas and South Australia all hold Synod meetings at 18 month intervals. Without exception, this has been a positive experience for them. The Northern Synod hold their Synod/Presbytery annually. They meet over 4 days and have found this to be useful in keeping their relationships intact. Other Synods have appealed to their Presbyteries to develop ways of strengthening the church to ensure that the valued non-statutory functions (relationships etc) of the Synod meeting are maintained between Synod meetings.

Mover: *Rev David de Kock*
Secunder: *Margaret Martin*