



S5.2 Standing Committee Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Western Australia By-Law

AUTHORITY

- S5.2.1 The Synod will appoint a Standing Committee in accordance with Paragraph 36 of the Constitution of the Uniting Church in Australia, hereinafter referred to as “the Standing Committee”.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

- S5.2.2 The Standing Committee will fulfill the all the responsibilities of a Synod Standing Committee as set out in the Regulations.

MEMBERSHIP

- S5.2.3 (a) The membership of the Standing Committee consists of:
- (i) the Moderator, Ex-Moderator, Moderator-Elect and General Secretary as ex- officio members;
 - (ii) six members of the Synod elected by the Synod (the SSC elected members), subject to the following provisos and subject to the procedures set out in these by-laws and such further procedures as may be determined by the Synod:
 - i) SSC elected members will be elected at each ordinary meeting of the Synod for the period of two ordinary meetings of Synod, subject to by-law S5.2.3 (a) (ii) (iii);
 - ii) The SSC elected members shall be eligible to continue as member of the Synod Standing Committee subject to them continuing to be ordinary members of the ordinary meeting of the Synod for the duration of their term as members of the Synod Standing Committee;
 - iii) In the case of the first Synod for which these by-laws apply (2025), six members of Synod will be elected and at its next meeting, Synod Standing Committee will determine which three SSC elected members will serve a one year term and which will serve a two year term;
 - iv) two members of Congress;
 - v) Chair of Presbytery or Nominee determined by the Presbytery Standing Committee;
 - vi) one member representing the UnitingCare Forum;

- vii) one member representing the Schools Forum; and
 - viii) not more than two other persons, or the number of persons which is closest to 10% of the total number of members under subparagraphs (i) to (vii) inclusive.
- (b) Only members of Synod are eligible for membership of the Synod Standing Committee.
- (c) The lay members shall not be fewer in number than the Ministerial members.

MEETINGS

- S5.2.4 (a) The Standing Committee will meet as determined by the Regulations but not less than once every three months.
- (b) The Standing Committee shall report its decisions to the next ordinary meeting of the Synod, which shall give directions as to the publishing thereof, and as to any further action that may be required in accordance with Regulation 3.7.4.1(g).

TECHNOLOGY

- S5.2.5 A meeting of the Standing Committee may be called or held using any technology agreed to, in advance, by all the members of the Committee.

QUORUM

- S5.2.6 The quorum for meetings of the Standing Committee shall be in accordance with Regulation 3.7.4.1(f).

SUBCOMMITTEES

- S5.2.7 The Standing Committee may establish steering committees, advisory groups, task groups and special purpose committees as may be needed from time to time. Such committees:
- (a) shall be for a specified period not exceeding twelve months, subject to renewal by resolution of the Standing Committee;
 - (b) may include persons other than Standing Committee members;
 - (c) are to be chaired by a member of the Standing Committee;
 - (d) are to have responsibilities, powers and authorities as determined by the standing Committee;
 - (e) may have their responsibilities, powers and authorities revoked or terminated at any time by the Standing Committee;
 - (f) may have any member removed from office by the Standing Committee;
 - (g) shall report to each meeting of the Standing Committee or when requested to do so by the Standing Committee.

S5.2.8 In order to fulfill its regulatory requirements, the Standing Committee will establish sub-committee called the Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Working Group

Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Working Group (DR&CR)

DR&CR Name

S5.2.9 The name of the Working Group is the “Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Working Group” (hereinafter called the DR&CR), a working group responsible to the Synod through the Standing Committee.

DR&CR Membership

S5.2.10 The membership of the DR&CR will be:

- (a) the Convenor who is appointed annually by the Standing Committee and acts as Co-ordinator of the Working Group;
- (b) the General Secretary;
- (c) a staff person appointed by the General Secretary who will also act as the Minute Secretary;
- (d) up to five persons appointed annually by the Standing Committee; and
- (e) the DR&CR may co-opt up to two further members to ensure balanced representation or to provide the DR&CR with knowledge, abilities or experience not otherwise available to the DR&CR.

DR&CR Purpose

S5.2.11 The purpose of the DR&CR is:

- (a) to coordinate and assist in any response of the Church in Western Australia to a disaster or major emergency;
- (b) to deal with funds available to assist in disasters and major emergencies including administrative costs, committee expenses and honoraria as necessary; and
- (c) to represent the Church in Western Australia in joint action with other Church and community agencies.

DR&CR Responsibilities

S5.2.12 The DR&CR is to advise and to act on behalf of the Synod in:

- (a) offering a response from the Church in Western Australia to those affected by disaster or major emergency through welfare support and/or assisting in providing pastoral care for the relief of suffering;
- (b) developing and maintaining appropriate operating procedures for pastoral relief ministry response in disaster situations;
- (c) developing and providing appropriate training resources for congregations and agencies;

- (d) organising and maintaining contact teams able to respond quickly to a need when called upon;
- (e) administering the WA Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Fund and conducting or organising appeals for funding for any disaster or emergency;
- (f) representing the Uniting Church in Western Australia in relating to the Trustees of Uniting Church National Disaster Fund, Council of Churches Emergency Relief Committee and the WA State Welfare Emergency Committee.

DR&CR Responding to a Disaster or Emergency

S5.2.13 The response of the DR&CR to any disaster shall be co-ordinated by the following procedures:

- (a) The DR&CR or the Coordinator, in conjunction with the Moderator and/or General Secretary will determine that a particular set of circumstances constitute a disaster or major emergency;
- (b) The DR&CR or the Coordinator will determine an appropriate response for the Church to any declared disaster or emergency;
- (c) The DR&CR or the Coordinator will advise the Moderator and/or General Secretary who are responsible for all statements to the Church or the public;
- (d) The Moderator may, on the advice of the DR&CR or Coordinator, initiate appeals for disaster relief or community recovery funding as required;
- (e) The DR&CR or the Coordinator are authorised to collaborate with ecumenical or public agencies in responding to disasters or major emergencies and will work with and in co-operation with the State Emergency Management Plan and Westplan Welfare.

DR&CR Meetings & Reporting

S5.2.14 The DR&CR will:

- (a) meet as required but at least once each year; and
- (b) report to each ordinary Synod through the Standing Committee and to the Standing Committee as requested or when necessary.

Legal Advisory Group (LAG)

LAG Name

S5.2.15 The “Legal Advisory Group” (hereinafter called the LAG) is a permanent subcommittee of the Standing Committee.

LAG Membership

S5.2.16 The membership of the LAG will be:

- (a) the General Secretary who is chairperson of the LAG; and
- (b) up to four other persons appointed by the Standing Committee with knowledge of Church Law and Uniting Church Regulations, including at least one lawyer. These persons are not required to be members of the Standing Committee or the Synod.

LAG Purpose and Responsibility

S5.2.17 The purpose and responsibility of the LAG are to offer guidance on legal matters that are referred to it.

LAG Meetings and Reporting

S5.2.18 The LAG will:

- (a) meet on an ad hoc basis at the request of the General Secretary;
- (b) report to the Standing Committee as required; and
- (c) have a quorum of three members.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

S5.2.19 A member of the Standing Committee who has any direct or indirect pecuniary or beneficial interest, or whose unfettered or independent judgment is or could be perceived as impaired by any contractual, business or other relationship, in a matter being dealt with by the Standing Committee must, as soon as the member becomes aware of that interest or relationship, disclose to the Standing Committee the nature and extent of that interest or relationship. The Standing Committee then determines whether the extent of the interest or relationship disclosed is such that the member should not participate in, vote on, or be present during any debate on that matter. The Standing Committee will minute its decision and record that decision in a Register of Conflicts.

SYNOD BUDGET

S5.2.20 The Standing Committee will be responsible for the preparation of the Synod budget and its presentation to the Synod. Throughout the budget preparation process, the Committee will work in cooperation with the Presbytery Standing Committee.

S5.2.21 The General Secretary shall convene an initial Budget Conference in February or March each year. The Conference will include all members of the Synod and Presbytery Standing Committees, two representatives of the Board of Finance and Investment and up to two persons selected by each of the Standing Committees who have knowledge or experience that adds to that already available to the Budget Conference. The General Secretary may invite the Chief Financial Officer and any other appropriate staff members to be present to assist the Budget Conference.

S5.2.22 At the initial Budget Conference:

- (a) the Board of Finance and Investment shall provide income projections for the coming year from the Uniting Church Investment Fund, Uniting Church Insurance Services, Trusts and Special Purpose Funds, and any other possible income sources;
- (b) the Presbytery shall provide income projections for the coming year from Mission and Service, Trust and Special Purpose Funds and any other possible income sources; and
- (c) all the expenditure centres shall provide expenditure estimates for the coming year. The Conference shall seek to frame a balanced budget or some other outcome as agreed by the Synod for the coming year. If this is not achieved, the General Secretary shall convene a Budget Task Group consisting of two members of the Synod Standing Committee, two members of the Presbytery Standing Committee and the chairperson of the Board of Finance and Investment to explore further options to achieve the desired budget outcome and report to a future Budget Conference.

S5.2.23 Further Budget Conferences and Budget Task Group meetings shall be convened by the General Secretary until the desired budget outcome is achieved.

S5.2.24 If the desired budget outcome is not achieved by 1 August, the General Secretary shall convene a joint meeting of the Synod and Presbytery Standing Committees which will propose an appropriate budget for the coming year for presentation to and final determination by the Synod in session.