

Uniting Church in Australia

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE

18 – 20 July 2014

PRESENT Andrew Dutney (President), Bethany Broadstock, Michelle Cook, Denise Champion, Terence Corkin, Dennis Corowa, Emma Davison, Geoffrey Grinton, Zac Hatfield Dodds, Andrew Johnson, Jason Kioa, Deidre Palmer, Stuart McMillan, Isabel Thomas-Dobson, Ian Tozer, Jenny Tymms.

In attendance: Peter Andrews, Glenda Blakefield, Chris Budden, John Cox, Kathy Jamieson, Peter Jones, Rosemary Hudson-Miller, Matt Pulford, Chris Walker.

WORSHIP On the Friday evening, as part of the formation of the community, the President preached and presided at the opening Service of Holy Communion. On the Saturday Jason Kioa led morning worship and Emma Davison led evening prayers. On the Sunday Geoffrey Grinton led morning worship and the closing prayer in the afternoon was led by the President.

WELCOMES The President welcomed all participants to the Standing Committee meeting. Also welcomed as visitors were Jim Mein for matters related to the Transition Board, Frontier Services and the Beneficiary Fund; Scott Kelly for matters related to Frontier Services; Robert Elkhuzen for the Beneficiary Fund and Kathy Jamieson who is filling in at this meeting for Jenny Bertalan who is on leave.

RECOGNITION OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND

On behalf of Standing Committee, the President acknowledged the local Eora people and their role as custodians of the land on which the meeting took place.

APOLOGIES

14.32 **It was resolved to** accept the apologies Kate Fraser, Stu Cameron, Alison Atkinson-Philips, Ronang Gurrawurra, Ian Price and Andrew Williams for the whole meeting and Deidre Palmer for Sunday.

PASTORAL MATTERS

It was reported that Ronang Gurrawurra has taken leave as National UAICC Chairperson due to ill health, Kay Dowling has retired as WA General Secretary. The participants were advised that Chris Mostert had surgery and was unable to attend the Standing Committee meeting; a whole family from Scotch College WA was killed in the Malaysian Airways flight and the son of a staff member of UnitingCare NSW/ACT Children, Young People and Families.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The General Secretary spoke to the agenda and timetable as listed in Document 1. Documents 9 and 16 were distributed on the Friday night.

14.33 **It was resolved to** approve the timetable and agenda of the meeting as outlined in Document 1, noting that the committee is free to vary the agenda at any time.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

14.34 It was resolved to confirm the minutes of the meeting held March 21 – 23 2014.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

14.35 It was resolved in relation to the conflicts of interest to:

- a) note:
 - (i) the Associate General Secretary's conflict of interest in relation to the review of the the General Secretary and the Associate General Secretary Reference Group; and
 - (ii) resolve that she be absent for this business;
- b) note:
 - (i) Chis Walker's conflict of interest in relation to the review of the General Secretary and his term of placement; and
 - (ii) resolve that he be absent for these items of business;
- c) note:
 - (i) Terence Corkin's conflict of interest in relation to his term as General Secretary;
 - (ii) resolve that he be absent for this business.

NOTE CONSTITUTION CLAUSE 39

Standing Committee members were reminded of the Constitution clause 39, as per ASC minute 00.71:

"On matters which, by a two thirds majority vote, the Assembly deems to be vital to the life of the Church, the Assembly shall seek the concurrence of the Synods and/or Presbyteries and/or Congregations as the Assembly may determine."

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On the Friday evening the President's report noted a range of events and activities in which he had participated since the last meeting, including:

- Presbytery Ministers' National Conference, Barossa Valley
- A Clear Call: National Conference on Mission and Evangelism, Adelaide
- Celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the Wayside Chapel, Sydney
- Parliamentary Reception for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Canberra
- Trans-Tasman Moderators' Meeting, Paihai ANZ
- Induction of the National Director, Frontier Services, Sydney
- Induction of the National Director, UnitingWorld, Sydney
- Chairing the Synods' National Consultation on Theological Colleges, Adelaide
- NCCA Executive Committee Meeting, Sydney
- Tongan National Conference, Kurrajong Hills
- Daring to Celebrate: Uniting Network National Conference, Sydney
- Northern Synod Annual Meeting, Darwin
- Fresh Words and Deeds: National Ministers' Conference, Charleville
- Welcoming a delegation from the China Christian Council, Sydney

He reported that a priority during this brief period had been to encourage the church to reflect on the implications of the reports from the National Census of Congregations and Ministers that he delivered to ASC in March. He developed an approach to the interpretation of this data for the church in consultation with Trans-Tasman Presidents and Moderators at their regular meeting, in April-May. He subsequently published information and comments in Australian Leadership, his blog, Synod magazines and his UCA Anniversary video. He reported that he is also involving the participants in the National Ministers' Conference in that conversation.

The President emphasised that while the UCA has a number of strengths and areas of vitality and growth that were confirmed by the Census, the data also confirms that we are not the church of the 1970s – even though many of our structures, Regulations and habits of mind assume that we are. To illustrate this he offered a comparison between the Methodist Church of SA in 1972 (based on the vote on church union) and the SA Synod of the UCA. He acknowledged the limitations of the comparison but suggested it was still sufficiently illustrative for the purpose.

- In 1972, 77% of Methodist circuits in SA were larger than 100 in membership. In 2013, 8% of UCA congregations in SA had attendances of more than 100.
- In 1972, 4% of Methodist circuits in SA were smaller than 50 in membership. In 2013, 72% of UCA congregations in SA had attendances of fewer than 50.
- In 1972, the median size of Methodist circuits in SA was 167. In 2013, the median size of UCA congregations was 35.
- Further, in the 1976 Australian Census, 14% of Australians identified as Congregational, Methodist or Presbyterian. In the 2011 Australian Census, 5% of Australians identified as UCA. (And, as a point of further comparison, in the Australian Census of 1901 27% of Australians identified with the Congregation, Methodist or Presbyterian churches.)

The President said, we are not the church of the 1970s. In fact the church today is as small as the church of the 1970s was large. (And we are as marginal to the dominant culture today as we were central to the Australian society a century ago.) He emphasised that this is neither a good thing nor a bad thing. For reasons that we don't have access to, the President said, God calls this kind of church into being for mission in Australia in the early 21st century – not the 1970s church we remember.

After offering a series of examples of matters on which the church seemed to be still invested in imagining ourselves as the church of the 1970s, the President invited ASC members to identify and discuss items on the weekend's agenda that should be informed by the particular kind of church the UCA is in 2014.

14.36 It was resolved to receive the report.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS STANDING COMMITTEE

1. Appeals Regulations (ASC Minute 12.26.01)

Andrew Johnson and Jenny Tymms introduced Document 18, consisting of the final report of the Task Group appointed to undertake the review of the operation of Part 6 Appeals regulations.

14.37 It was resolved to:

14.37.01 receive the report;

14.37.02 request the Assembly Legal Reference Committee to draft regulations to give effect to the following changes to the Appeals Regulations:

- a) amend the Regulations to give effect to the following definitions:
 - (i) Standing Appeal Panel: Those appointed by the Synods to form the cohort from which the Convenor is to appoint to an Appeal Committee;
 - (ii) Convenor: Person appointed by the ASC to appoint the Appeal Committee for the hearing of appeals. They shall not be eligible to be a member of an Appeal Committee;

- (iii) Appeal Committee: Those appointed by the Convenor, Standing Appeal Panel to hear particular appeals;
 - (iv) Chairperson: Person appointed by the Convenor, Standing Appeal Panel to chair a particular appeal;
- b) provide a definition of 'support person', based on the definition in Regulation 5.6.2, which explicitly states that the person is not intended to be an advocate;
 - c) provide a definition of 'procedural fairness' based on the definition in Regulation 5.6.11;
 - d) provide the option for legal representation for parties to an appeal at the expense of the parties;
 - e) amend Part 6 to remove the right of appeal on the merits and provide appeals only on the grounds of law, including:
 - (i) failure to follow prescribed procedures under the Constitution and Regulations;
 - (ii) acted contrary to procedural fairness;
 - (iii) the body wrongly interpreted the constitution, regulations, by-laws or rules; and
 - (iv) other relevant errors in law;
 - f) amend the Regulations to provide appeals under Part 6 for the matters outlined in Schedule 1 (below);
 - g) amend Part 6 to include a schedule of appealable matters;
 - h) amend Part 6 to provide the power to the Convenor to determine that, on the basis of the documents lodged by an appellant, there are no grounds for an appeal;
 - i) amend Regulation 6.1 to establish a single Standing Appeal Panel appointed in the following way:
 - (i) membership appointed by the Synods and the National Executive of the UAICC (up to six from each Synod and the National Executive of the UAICC);
 - (ii) convenor appointed by the Assembly Standing Committee after seeking nominations from the Synods;
 - (iii) appointment for a period of three years and available for reappointment;
 - (iv) membership made up of not less than one third women and one third men;
 - (v) include the following skills and experience:
 1. legal expertise,
 2. knowledge and experience of the processes of the church,
 3. understanding of the theology and polity of the church,
 4. understanding of the various ministry and mission contexts of the church,
 5. knowledge of and experience with the matters on which appeals can be made; and
 - (vi) excluding the President, Moderators and General Secretaries from appointment;
 - j) amend Regulation 6.3 to:
 - (i) remove the 21 day time limit and replace with a requirement that it be done as expeditiously as possible;
 - (ii) add requirement to Regulation 6.3(b) that an Appeal Committee shall include an appropriate mix of skills (see (iv));

- (iii) provide authority to the Convenor to make appointment outside of the Appeal Panel as described in Regulation 6.3(c); and
 - (iv) require that the Convenor, where an appeal involves a member of the UAICC, to include an indigenous person on the Panel;
- k) amend Regulation 6.4 to:
 - (i) explicitly state that the Appeal Panel shall act with procedural fairness; and
 - (ii) clarify that the Appeal Panel shall have the discretion to decide whether to receive new information;
 - l) amend Regulation 6.5 to include reference to appeals being handled expeditiously and clarifying the discretion of the Chairperson to set and manage the timetable for the Appeal process while retaining the timetable as a guideline;
 - m) amend Regulation 6.5 to explicitly provide for a hearing to be conducted by use of technology such as teleconferencing or video conferencing;
 - n) amend Regulation 6.5 to provide the power to the Appeal Panel to:
 - (i) refer a decision back to the original decision maker.
 - (ii) recommend to a church body that they make an ex gratia payment to a party;
 - o) remove Regulation 6.6 and make any consequential amendments to the Regulations to provide for appeals relating to Assembly decisions to be handled by the Standing Appeal Panel;
 - p) amend Regulation 6.7 to:
 - (i) provide for the Moderator, or in the case of Assembly decision the President, the discretion to consult with any relevant parties prior to making any statement concerning an Appeal decision; and
 - (ii) require all decisions of an Appeal Committee including reasons to be provided to all Synod General Secretaries and the Assembly General Secretary;
- 14.37.03 request the General Secretaries to:
- a) establish a policy for the costs, expenses and remuneration of Appeal Panel members to be applied by the Convenor of the Appeal Panel (Regulation 6.1(i));
 - b) establish a training schedule for members of the Standing Appeal Panel including:
 - (i) training for new members of the Standing Appeal Panel;
 - (ii) ongoing development of Standing Appeal Panel members;
 - (iii) continuous learning and improvement of the management of appeals; and
 - c) provide advice on the outcome of this request to the March 2015 meeting of the Standing Committee; and
- 14.37.04
- a) request Synods to consider making a contribution of resources to support the Convenor of the Standing Appeal Panel and the training and development of the Standing Appeal Panel; and
 - b) bring a report to the March 2015 meeting of the Standing Committee.

2. Associate General Secretary (ASC Minute 14.11.05)

Bethany Broadstock spoke to Document 9, consisting of a report from the Review Task Group on the establishment of a Reference Group for the Associate General Secretary.

14.38 It was resolved to:

- 14.38.01 receive the report;
- 14.38.02 approve the implementation of a Reference Group for the Associate General Secretary;
- 14.38.03 adopt the Terms of Reference for the Reference Group (Attachment A);
- 14.38.04 refer the nomination of a Standing Committee member to this Reference Group to the Assembly Officers;
- 14.38.05 request the General Secretary, in consultation with the Associate General Secretary, to finalize the membership of the Reference Group and report to the next meeting of the Standing Committee; and
- 14.38.06 request that the General Secretary, in consultation with the Associate General Secretary, bring a report on the usefulness of the group and any recommendations for change to the November 2015 meeting of the Standing Committee.

3. Conflict of Interest re Staff on Boards/Councils (ASC Minutes 13.41.04 and 13.60.02)

Geoffrey Grinton and Jenny Tymms presented Documents 14 and 14A, consisting of a report from the Task Group and an information paper, respectively.

14.39 It was resolved to:

- 14.39.01 receive the report;
- 14.39.02 endorse the attached Information Paper on Conflict of Interest and the Membership of Boards and Councils of the Uniting Church in Australia and commend it to Synods, Presbyteries and Assembly bodies;
- 14.39.03 request the Legal Reference Committee to prepare proposals consistent with the Regulation for adoption by the Standing Committee or the 14th Assembly as appropriate so that:
 - a) no persons who are staff of the Assembly or of any of its agencies, where staff is defined as someone who has a direct reporting line or accountability to the General Secretary or Associate General Secretary, or who is a member of the team or support staff of such a person, are eligible for election to the Standing Committee;
 - b) if a member of the Standing Committee accepts appointment as a member of the staff of the Assembly or of any of its agencies, as defined in 4.3.(a) above, that member should then resign from the Standing Committee; and
- 14.39.04 thank and discharge the Task Group.

4. Consultation on Theological Colleges (ASC Minute 14.08.06)

Andrew Dutney spoke to Document 20, consisting of a report on the national consultation on theological colleges held on 10 May 2014 in Adelaide.

14.40 It was resolved to receive the report.

5. Evaluation of the Covenanting Process (ASC Minutes 12.28.01 and 13.78.07)

Michelle Cook and Stuart McMillan presented Document 17, consisting of a report from the Covenanting Audit Task Group.

14.41 It was resolved to:

14.41.01 receive the report;

14.41.02 give thanks to God for the covenant relationship between the UAICC and the UCA and commit to deepening and strengthening its expression in the national life of the church as witnessed powerfully in the week 'A Destiny Together';

14.41.03 request the General Secretary to initiate a conversation with the UAICC about

- a) the role of the Standing Committee Covenanting Support Task Group; and
- b) the possibility of a meeting for the Standing Committee and the UAICC National Executive as an expression of a desire to hear one another's stories and deepen relationships by engaging around issues of common interest in a context of prayer, sharing and shared space; and

14.41.04 encourage the Task Group to continue conversations with the National Executive of the UAICC regarding the form and content of the report and recommendations to be presented to the 14th Assembly.

6. Investment in Fossil Fuels (ASC Minute 13.78.11)

Zac Hatfield Dodds introduced Document 10, consisting of a proposal for the consideration of the Standing Committee.

14.42 It was resolved to:

14.42.01 receive the report;

14.42.02 note:

- a) the long commitment of the Uniting Church to social, environmental, and intergenerational justice, which is expressed from our *Statement to the Nation to For the Sake of the Planet and all its People* and *An Economy of Life*;
- b) the continued reluctance by governments around the world to take action sufficient to keep climate change within the internationally agreed limit of two degrees or less;
- c) that the amount of carbon in listed reserves owned by the global top 200 fossil fuel companies is five times greater than can be emitted while limiting climate change to two degrees, and therefore that action on climate change would turn most of these reserves into 'stranded assets';
- d) the resolution by the NSW/ACT Synod to divest from direct fossil fuel extraction and the recent resolution of the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania Standing Committee to divest from companies mining or exporting the most damaging forms of fossil fuels, in the context of a global campaign to divest from fossil fuels ("Go Fossil Free"); and

- b) that the Assembly uses the *Ethical Investment Principles* of the NSW/ACT Synod and has substantial overlapping financial arrangements;
- 14.42.03 recognise that further investment in the extraction of fossil fuels contributes to and makes it more difficult to address climate change, and on the basis of the harm this will cause, further investment and extraction is unethical; and direct the Assembly Investment Committee to:
- a) implement the divestment policy used by the NSW/ACT Synod; and
 - b) work closely with the Synod as it reviews the policy, particularly regarding the 'net materiality' approach and the viability of excluding companies based on reserves; and
- 14.42.04
- a) congratulate the Synods of NSW/ACT and Victoria and Tasmania on their work towards divestment from fossil fuels,
 - b) commend this course of action to other Uniting Church entities as they make their investment decisions; and
 - c) commend the movement to divest from fossil fuels to our ecumenical partners.

7. Task Group on the Prevention of, and Response to, Complaints of Sexual Abuse within Congregations (ASC Minutes 13.38 and 14.12.02)

The General Secretary presented Document 19, consisting of a draft policy prepared by Rhonda Ianna on behalf of the working group set up by persons involved in the Church discipline processes.

14.43 It was resolved to:

- 14.43.01 receive the report;
- 14.43.02 adopt the policy 'Complaints of Sexual Abuse and Misconduct' for members, adherents and lay persons subject to edits identified at the meeting;
- 14.43.03 thank the Task Group established at the National Consultation on Complaints Processes for its work; and
- 14.43.04 request that the Task Group provide a final version of the Guidelines to the November 2014 meeting of the Assembly Standing Committee.

FROM ASSEMBLY BODIES

1. Anglican-UCA Dialogue

The General Secretary introduced Document 12, consisting of a report from the joint working group.

14.44 It was resolved to:

- 14.44.01 receive the report of the Anglican – Uniting Church Dialogue Group;
- 14.44.02 express the Standing Committee's sincere appreciation for the leadership and faithfulness shown by Rev Prof Chris Mostert over two decades in the Anglican – Uniting Church dialogue and thank to him and the UCA members of the dialogue for their service to the goal of Christian unity; and

- 14.44.03 commend to the 14th Assembly for adoption the document *Weaving a New Cloth* as the basis for ecumenical co-operation with the Anglican Church of Australia.

2. ASC Governance Group

The General Secretary presented Document 15, consisting of a report from the Task Group.

14.45 It was resolved to:

- 14.45.01 receive the report;
- 14.45.02 note the advice that the Task Group established to address Proposal 69 from the 13th Assembly re Baptism, Confirmation and Membership has been unable to complete its work;
- 14.45.03 refer Proposal 69 to the Formation, Education and Discipleship Working Group with a view to developing a process for discussion at the 14th Assembly, taking into account the previous work that has been done; and
- 14.45.03 thank and discharge the Task Group.

3. Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

3.1 Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

Peter Andrews spoke to Document 2, consisting of a report on financial matters, risk management and Committee membership.

14.46 It was resolved to:

- 14.46.01 receive the report;
- 14.46.02 note the Annual Budgets for Assembly agencies for 2014-2015;
- 14.46.03 appoint Tony Engel and Stuart Woodward to the Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee; and
- 14.46.04 determine that the Standing Committee requires that the Assembly Risk Matrix be provided to the members at each meeting.

3.2 Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee

Peter Andrews spoke to Document 4, consisting of responses to a series of questions to allow the Standing Committee to assess the Committee's performance in relation to its delegations.

- 14.47 It was resolved to** refer the matters identified in the report to the Assembly Governance Group for further consideration and advice back to the Standing Committee.

4. Beneficiary Fund

Robert Elkhuisen and Jim Mein introduced Document 8, consisting of a report on the future direction for the Beneficiary Fund.

14.48 It was resolved to:

- 14.48.01 receive the report;

- 14.48.02 note that continuance of self-insurance for present and future defined benefit members of the Fund has been confirmed;
- 14.48.03 note the progress undertaken by the Board to date in continuing its investigation into the future structure of the Fund; and
- 14.48.04 request the Board to bring recommendations regarding the future structure and operation of the Fund to the November meeting of the Standing Committee.

5. Education for Ministry Working Group

- 14.49** **It was resolved to** defer the discussion of this matter until the November 2014 meeting of the Standing Committee.

6. Frontier Services Interim Board

Jim Mein and Scott Kelly spoke to Document 6, consisting of a report from the Board, the draft revised Frontier Services Mandate and its draft revised Constitution.

- 14.50** **It was resolved to:**

- 14.50.01 receive the report;
- 14.50.02 determine that
 - a) no decision be made at this time in relation to the five options identified in the review or the operations of Frontier Service;
 - b) Frontier Services should for the next 12 months undertake delivery of both community services and patrol ministry;
 - c) from 20 July 2014, Frontier Services may seek to renew existing community service delivery contracts and may also respond to requests to obtain new community service delivery contracts on the proviso that:
 - (i) Frontier Services develops a business case and thorough risk analysis for each contract detailing what the contract will entail, how it will be delivered and the contract's financial viability;
 - (ii) all such contracts be approved by the Assembly Audit, Finance and Risk Committee before any contracts are accepted; and
 - (iii) all contracts shall be executed by UCA Assembly Limited;
 - d) the Frontier Services Board shall bring a financial report to each Standing Committee meeting; and
 - e) that there be two key governance documents for Frontier Services: the Frontier Services Mandate and the Frontier Services Constitution;
- 14.50.03 approve
 - a) the amended Constitution (Attachment B) and Mandate (Attachment C) as an interim measure and seek further proposals for changes from the Board in the light of the development of options for the future;
 - b) the criteria for selection of members of the Board of Frontier Services as proposed in the report; and
 - c) the process of recruitment of the Chairperson and members of the Frontier Services Board while ensuring appropriate continuity between the membership of the Interim Board and the new Frontier Services Board;

- 14.50.04 request that the Board
- a) complete the foreshadowed review of Patrol Ministry and a detailed analysis of the options presented in the Frontier Services Community Services Review, including formal engagement with UnitingCare agencies across the life of the Church; and
 - b) bring a report to the Standing Committee no later than March 2015, proposing a business case and risk analysis for the preferred option or combination of options for the future expression of the Uniting Church's commitment to remote Australia;
- 14.50.05 appoint Gary Williamson, John Baxter and Dianne Torrens as members of the Frontier Services Interim Board; and
- 14.50.06 request the Frontier Services Board to invite Andrew Johnson to attend their Board meetings as a non-voting member

7. General Report

The General Secretary introduced Document 26, consisting of a report on various matters.

- 14.51** **It was resolved to** receive the report.

8. Legal Reference Committee

The General Secretary presented Document 22, consisting of a report on the matters the Assembly Legal Reference Committee dealt with since the November 2013 Standing Committee meeting.

- 14.52** **It was resolved to:**

- 14.52.01 receive the report;
- 14.52.02 delete Regulation 3.7.5.3; and
- 14.52.03 approve a new regulation 3.1.6 (j) with the heading Theological and Ministerial Education

The Assembly shall be responsible for oversight of standards of ministerial education and for establishing policies relating to standards of formation, education and training for the specified ministries, including continuing education, professional development and training. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- (i) recognition of colleges as approved centres for training for ministry;
- (ii) determining the pre-requisites for admission to candidature and the standards of ministerial education to be required of a candidate to qualify for recognition as a Minister, including the requirements for completion of the period of discernment;
- (iii) prescribing the areas of study and the minimum requirements within each area which shall comprise an acceptable course of study for the various ministries of the Church, including the requirements for mentoring and support for newly ordained ministers during the first three years of their ministry;
- (iv) receive annually for review from the faculty of each recognized theological college a report on ways in which the prescriptions specified under (iii) are being met;
- (v) maintain a roll of candidates;
- (vi) setting standards for qualifying examinations where appropriate for applicants seeking acceptance as candidates for specified ministries and arranging for the administration of such examinations;

- (vii) prescribing the conditions under which a candidate qualifies for ordination and/or recognition and issues statements certifying that the requirements of Phase Two have been fulfilled in respect of each candidate on receipt of advice from the faculty concerned that all requirements of the course have been satisfactorily met;
- (viii) arranging regular consultations of staff of the several theological colleges as may be appropriate; and
- (ix) determining guidelines whereby Ministers and Youth Workers shall fulfil the requirement for three to five year continuing education agreements with their Presbytery or other appointing body;

14.52.04 approve the following consequential amendments:

Reg 2.1 Definition of Certified Candidate – delete “to whom the Ministerial Education Commission has issued a statement” and insert “to whom has been issued”;

Reg 2.3.1(a) – delete the words in brackets;

Reg 2.3.2.1(c) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 2.4.1(a) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 2.4.3(a) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

and similarly in the definition of core and general competencies

Reg 2.4.4(a) & (b) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 2.4.8(c)(i) – re draft to allow the MEB to certify that the required course of studies has been completed in place the Assembly doing it on the recommendation of the Ministerial Education Board;

Reg 2.10.2(b) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 3.1.5(i)(vii) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 3.7.4.3(c) (ii)(3) –replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”; (However if 3.7.5.3 (c) (v) is removed this regulation is not required)

Reg 3.7.4.3(c) (iii)(5) - Delete

Reg 3.7.4.3(c) (iii)(6) – Delete

Reg 3.7.4.3(c) (iii)(7) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 3.7.4.4(a) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 3.7.4.5(a) – replace “Ministerial Education Commission” with “Assembly”;

Reg 3.7.4.5(c) – delete “through the Ministerial Education Commission”

14.52.05 the effective date for the amendments is 20 July 2014; and

14.52.06 thank and discharge the Ministerial Education Commission.

9. National Task Group re the Royal Commission

The General Secretary spoke to Document 11, consisting of a report from the National Task Group.

14.53 It was resolved to:

14.53.01 receive the report;

14.53.02 appoint Mr Howard Packer as a member of the national Task Group;

14.53.03 note the submission made by the Uniting Church to the Royal Commission’s Issues Paper on Redress Schemes;

14.53.04 direct the Assembly General Secretary to convene a meeting of representatives of all synods with a view to achieving a single framework for the compulsory recording of complaints, and the protocols regarding access to the information lodged; and

- 14.53.05 strongly advise the President, President-Elect and the General Secretary to attend a Public Hearing, with a media officer, for a significant period of time to familiarise themselves with the Commission's procedures, and report to the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

10.Task Group on the Term of the General Secretary

Alistair Macrae chaired the meeting while the President introduced Document 16, consisting of a report from the Task Group.

14.54 It was resolved to:

- 14.54.01 receive the report;
- 14.54.02 noting that the Rev Terence Corkin has indicated that he will not be available for an extension of his term past 31 December 2015, appoint to the Nominating Committee Andrew Dutney (Convenor) Heather Watson, Geoffrey Grinton, Emma Davison, Peter Jones and a nominee from UAICC, with the ability of the committee to co-opt as needed;
- 14.54.03 request the Task Group to prepare and circulate electronically to the Standing Committee a needs analysis of the Church for the role of General Secretary in the future;
- 14.54.04 that the Nominations Committee be authorized to:
- (i) review and revise the Position Description of the Assembly General Secretary, taking into account feedback received by the Task Group on the Term of the General Secretary and the findings of the needs analysis;
 - (ii) following approval of the Position Description by the Standing Committee by an electronic ballot, to advertise, receive applications and interview applicants for the position of Assembly General Secretary; and
 - (iii) bring a nomination to the November 2014 meeting of the Standing Committee, with a view to presenting a nomination to the 14th Assembly in July 2015; and
- 14.54.05 that the process for appointing the next Assembly General Secretary require a consensus of the members of the Standing Committee and the support of at least 2/3 of the votes cast in a written ballot at the meeting of the Assembly.

11.Transition Board – Frontier Services Aged Care

Isabel Thomas Dobson presented Document 5, consisting of a report from the Transition Board.

14.55 It was resolved to:

- 14.55.01 receive the report;
- 14.55.02 delegate any residual responsibilities of the Transition Board, particularly relating to the contracts with Hetti Perkins, Juninga and the sign off of the Auditor's statements to the General Secretary and the Chairperson of the Assembly Finance, Audit and Risk Committee; and
- 14.55.03 thank and discharge the Transition Board and the members as Key Personnel under the Aged Care Act.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Assembly Sustainability

The General Secretary spoke to Document 3, consisting of a report on the challenges the Assembly is facing.

14.56 It was resolved to:

14.56.01 receive the report; and

14.56.02 request the President convene a national consultation between the Assembly and the Synods including all General Secretaries and other relevant people to explore the Assembly's future, financial sustainability with particular attention to:

- a) the current work of the Assembly (stocktake/audit);
- b) the distinct role of the Assembly (Basis of Union/Constitution / Regulations and other distinct roles developed over the life of the Church);
- c) the medium time revenue from Synods (5 years out);
- d) the areas of ministry and mission undertaken by the Assembly which are also, or could also, be undertaken by Synods; and
- e) the possible future shape of ministry and mission for the Assembly and Synods.

2. Census of Ministers

Bethany Broadstock presented Document 21, consisting of a paper reflecting from the perspective of younger members of the Church on the issues raised by the 2013 Census of UCA Congregations and Ministers.

14.57 It was resolved to receive the report.

3. General Business

The General Secretary presented various items in Document 24.

14.58 It was resolved to:

14.58.01 appoint Ms Alison Cooke and Mr James Batley to the UnitingWorld Relief and Development National Committee;

14.58.02 appoint Mrs Hannah Jackson and Mr Christopher Clarke to the Church Connections National Committee;

14.58.03 note the resignation of Rev Sef Carroll from the Education for Ministry Working Group and invite the Committee to bring a replacement nomination if it considers it helpful to do so;

14.58.04 note that the paper on Skills Matrix for Assembly Committees is not available for this meeting and has been rescheduled for the November meeting;

14.58.05 note that the report of the Ministry of Pastor Working Group is not available for this meeting and has been rescheduled for the November meeting;

14.58.06 note that the governance conversations anticipated by ASC minute 14.30.01 are continuing and a report will be brought to the November meeting of the Standing Committee;

- 14.58.07 note that the Assembly Officers acting under the authority granted by ASC minute 14.29.06 (b) appointed Mr John Kitchener and Ms Paula Reid as Directors of UCA Assembly Ltd;
- 14.58.08 receive the report on the conversation arising from ASC minute 14.23.03 re a national legal vehicle for UnitingCare work across Australia and defer further discussion to the November 2014 meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 14.58.09
- a) extend the placement of the Rev Dr Tony Floyd to 31 March 2015;
 - b) appoint Jason Kioa (Convenor), Amelia Koh–Butler, Michelle Cook and Glenda Blakefield as members of the Nominating Committee for the appointment of a new National Director Multicultural and Cross Cultural Ministry; and
 - c) request the Nominating Committee to bring a report and revised position description to the November 2014 meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 14.58.10
- a) extend the placement of Rev Dr Chris Walker as the National Consultant Christian Unity, Doctrine and Worship until 31 July 2017; (agreement); and
 - b) undertake a full review of the role and the incumbent prior to July 2017.
- 14.58.11
- a) receive the correspondence from the Hunter Presbytery re a code of conduct for lay leaders; and
 - b) defer the discussion of the letter to the November meeting of the Standing Committee;
- 14.58.12 to place on record that the Uniting Church in Australia joins with the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia in giving thanks to God that 2014 marks the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the Metropolis of Australia and New Zealand under the Ecumenical Patriarch Gregorios VII in 1924. The Uniting Church in Australia affirms the important place the Greek Orthodox Church occupies in the Australian ecumenical scene and the contribution of the Church and its people to Australian life. We pray God's blessing on the Greek Orthodox Church as it continues to serve God and the people in this part of the world. We celebrate with it this significant anniversary and give thanks to God;
- 14.58.13
- a) write to the Board of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to congratulate them on the introduction of news bulletins translated into the Walpiri and Yolngu Matha languages, and to express appreciation for this initiative which has been taken now for the first time in the national broadcaster's history; and
 - b) send a copy of the correspondence to the Federal Minister for Communications, the Shadow Minister for Communications and the Managing Director of the ABC.

4. Preparations for the 14th Assembly

The General Secretary introduced Document 27, consisting of a report from the 14th Assembly Design Team. Table group discussion followed.

14.59 It was resolved to:

- 14.59.01 receive the report;

14.59.02 refer the list of issues identified at the meeting to the Assembly Officers to be put in a form that can be shared with the Church in fulfilment of the requirements of Regulation 3.7.5.1 (l) (ii).

5. Presidential Ruling No.30

Alistair Macrae chaired the meeting while the President spoke to Document 23, consisting of Presidential Ruling No.30.

14.60 **It was resolved to** confirm Presidential Ruling No.30 (Attachment D).

6. Queensland Synod Correspondence

John Cox spoke to Document 28, consisting of a correspondence from the Queensland Synod.

14.61 **It was resolved to:**

14.61.01 receive the correspondence from the Synod of Queensland; and

14.61.02 accept the offer of the Queensland Synod General Secretary to facilitate a national conversation on governance with the General Secretaries and other persons involved in the issues that will allow an opportunity to articulate learning, share wisdom and resource improvement in effective governance for the church in the light of recent governance failures.

CLOSURE

The meeting closed at 4.00pm with prayer led by the President.

DATE FOR 2014 **14 - 16 November 2014**

DATE FOR 2015 **20 – 22 March 2015**
28 – 30 August 2015
13 – 15 November 2015