

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

AGENDA 2.4.1

Standing Committee on Constitutions

MEMBERS

David Dreckow, (Chairman, Rev Tim Ebbs, Margaret Koch, Gilbert Materne, Rev Wally Schiller (Secretary), Faye Schmidt

PURPOSE

The chief purpose is to continue to serve the church in constitutional matters to ensure good order, as this enables people to work together in a way that is pleasing to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST PLAN

Key Activities	Planned Annual Activities/Outcomes	Achievement of Annual Activities/Outcomes
1.1.1.1. Model Constitution for Congregations	Provide model constitutions for Congregations and Parishes of the Church. Hold Constitutional Forum. Recommend one be held approx every 3 years or when major changes affecting Districts need to be implemented.	Constitutional Forum in 2017 brought together District EO, DCC representative, District Constitution Committee representatives and the LCA Constitutions Committee. As a result a range of suggestions and recommendations were received for the models provided to the Districts for distribution to Congregations and Parishes.
1.1.1.2. Changes to Constitutions and Terms of Reference to various bodies due to the changes in the structure of the Church as a result of the Synod decision	Review matters as requested by GCC in preparation for the new structures. To be completed prior to 2018 Synod.	Critical work for next convention is still in progress and will be completed as it is received from GCC.
1.1.1.3. Restructure the Constitution of the Church	3.1 Initiate Task force to review legal requirements and options for Structure of the Church. 3.2 Work with GCC and relevant boards and Agencies of the Church to identify requirements. 3.3 Complete the project in the next triennium.	Some work has started on identifying areas of the constitution that require work to reflect current governance and management requirements and areas that require greater clarity. These include but are not limited to Definitions, Judicial process, By-laws, Rules for boards, committees, auxiliaries, Funds, Voting Rights, consistence of terminology, Rules for Transacting Business, etc..

1.1.1.4. Rules for transacting Business	Reformatting and making the rules easier to read and understand.	Any change of content has been put on hold as requested by GCC due to proposed restructure of the Constitution of the Church. Draft easy reference version in progress.
1.1.1.5. Aboriginal Representation – Synod Voting	Provide an option for Aboriginal community groups to be represented.	Proposal for Aboriginal groups to be recognised as congregations of the Church has been provided to GCC.
2. Changes to Constitutions and Terms of Reference of various bodies due to the changes in the structure of the Church as a result of the Synod decision	Review various matters as requested by GCC in preparation for trialling the new structures. To be completed prior to 2018 Synod.	Critical work for next convention is still in progress and will be completed as it is received from GCC.
3. Deal with matters as directed by GCC		

SUCSESSES

- There is a good mix of skills and the current committee members work well together.
- There is however still a vacancy for one pastor.
- Administrative assistance provided by the LCA office had been very much appreciated but is taking time to get used to the help.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Challenges have mainly related to the Model Constitution.

Congregations are required to have a constitution that is acceptable to the church. The model has been prepared for this purpose.

It includes three basic categories –

- 3.1.1.1.** Clauses that cannot be changed because of the relationship to the church.
- 3.1.1.2.** Clauses that should not change to ensure consistency and unity across the church
- 3.1.1.3.** Clauses that may need to be changed to suit the needs of the congregation to suit the local situation

SCoC needs to improve the communication and consultation with the Districts in matters that are relevant to them.

RISKS

Description of risk	Likelihood of risk occurring and potential impact for the ministry and LCA	Summary of action to mitigate the risk
1. Model Constitutions. Clarification of the status of these Models is required - Consistent information needs to be provided to Congregations when reviewing their constitution	Impact is that inconsistent information is being provided to congregations. Congregations reviewing their constitutions need not be confused by changes made to the Models by District Committees.	Proposal and recommendation submitted to GCC.
2. Status of decisions of Convention of Synod	The impact of proposals that are in principle the same as previously presented and rejected has distracted the Church from its Objects in Article 3. in the Constitution of the Church.	Constitutional clarity is required regarding proposals being presented to Convention that are in principle the same as those resolved at the previous Convention.
3. Judicial Process - there are gaps in the current constitution relating to pastors	The steps of the process are not clear and must be in accordance with Scripture. There needs to be the appropriate balance of discipline, pastoral care whilst complying with legislation.	Constitutional changes are required when appropriate advice and response is received from College of Bishops. Proposal submitted to GCC.

ALIGNMENT TO LCA STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2013–2018

The work of SCoC is largely directed by GCC and would therefore align with the LCA Strategic Directions.

COOPERATING LCA BOARDS AND AGENCIES

Any board or agency of the church that requires changes to constitutions. Generally good cooperation, however it has been a challenge regarding the Districts use Model Constitutions.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The SCoC's budget requirement is for costs covered by the LCA for:

- travel and accommodation for interstate committee members attending regular meetings
 - travel and accommodation for those who attended the Constitutional Forum in 2017
- Secretarial support provided to the committee by the LCA